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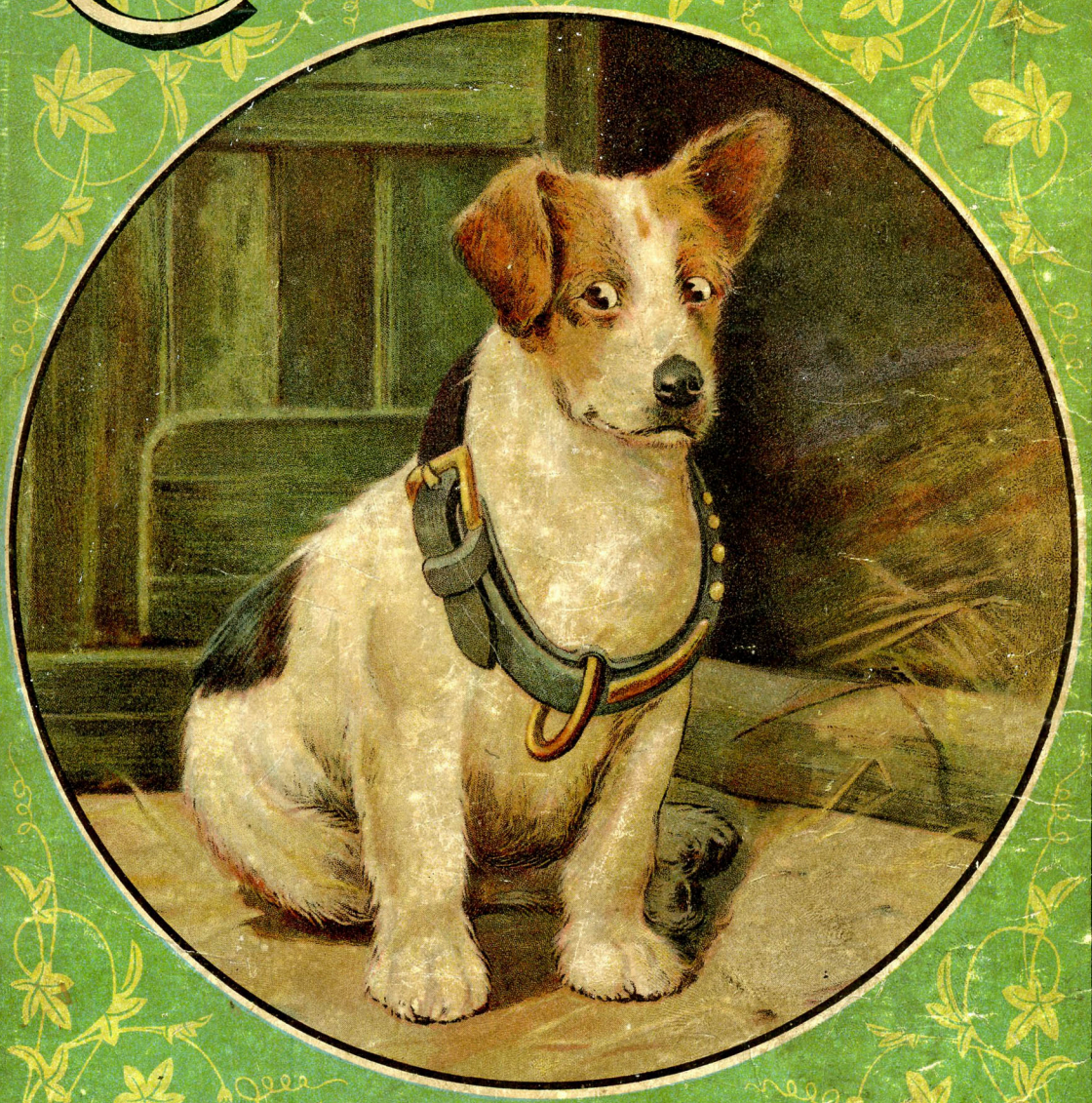

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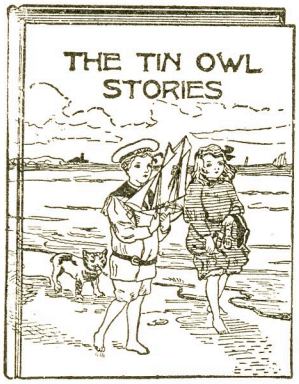

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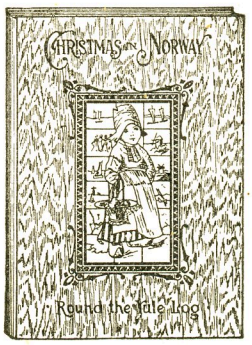

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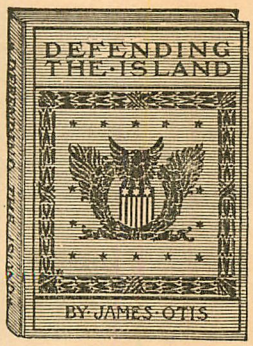

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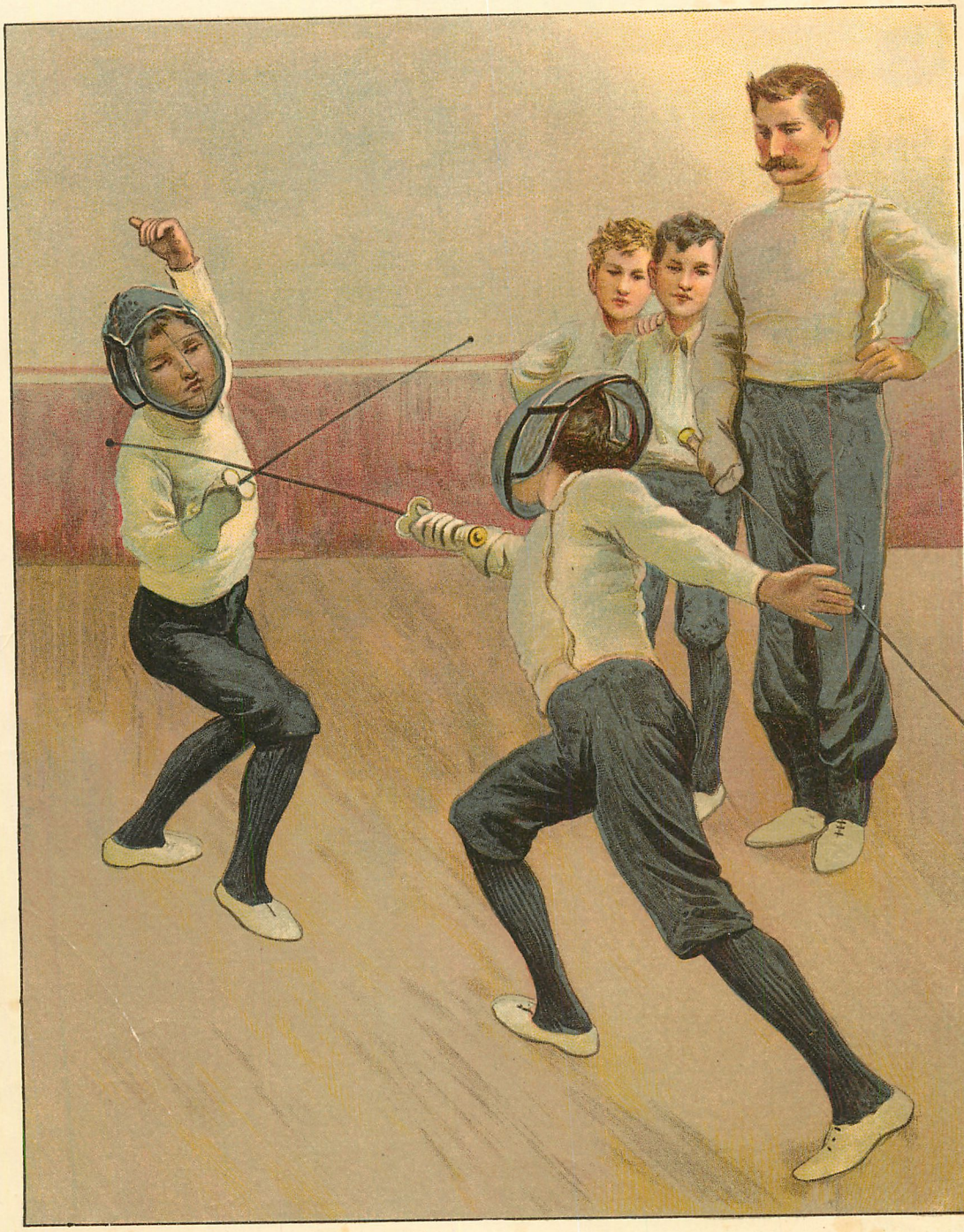

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CHATTERBOX.

"Mark's nurses shrieked and fled."

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

By Fred Whishaw.

CHAPTER I.

THE COUNTESS STIRINOF, as perhaps you would guess by the name, was a Russian lady; but she was only Russian by marriage. Her husband, the Count, had met her in England and married her there, and had brought her home to his great house at Krasny, where he was accustomed to pass the summer season. It was at the country house at Krasny that the twins were born, little Mark and Paul—Count Mark and Count Paul, as they were called from their birth, in accordance with the custom in Russia—as pretty a pair of babies as you would wish to see, and, of course, the pride and joy of their sweet English mother and of their Russian father, in whose eyes they became, from the moment of their appearance, the two most important people upon this earth, objects more precious than the most priceless gems, things to be watched over and tended with all the care that wealth could command. A whole staff of nurses was immediately engaged for the two babies, who were never to be seen about in their perambulators without a procession of five or six women in attendance. One would think that the children—who are to be the heroes of this story—would be safe enough under so strong an escort of nurses, and yet, when they were not yet two years old, they met with an adventure—a terrible one, too—which was to be the first of many exciting and dangerous events in their lives, of which I shall have to tell you in these pages.

The summer was delightful, as it generally is in Russia. June was doing its very best to make life in the country a sweet dream. The forest, opening out of the park at Krasny, was carpeted with lilies-of-the-valley in bloom and wild strawberries, ripe and luscious, and the nurses, to their delight, had received orders to take the children into the woods to pick lilies, and to eat, in moderation, of the delicious strawberries, which nowhere are so full-flavoured as in the northern regions, which are their home.

'Order the landau,' said the Countess, 'after dinner, and you can all get out at the edge of the wood. Don't go so far into the forest that you cannot see your way out again, and don't let the children overeat themselves or swallow unripe fruit.'

The little picnic party spent a delightful afternoon. They picked huge bunches of lilies and gathered basketsful of strawberries, wandering close to a widish pathway which led through the forest to a neighbouring village. The two children rolled and toddled among the sweet-scented flowers and fruit, their little hands red with strawberry juice, their mouths the same. They laughed and crowed and kicked to their hearts' content. Knowing that so long as they kept the path in view they could always find their way home without difficulty, the women took their precious charges deeper into the wood than they knew.

Suddenly, shortly before the time fixed upon for their return, an amazing and terrible thing happened. No one could afterwards describe the occurrence very graphically, probably because all were so shocked and horrified at the moment that heads were 'lost' and presence of mind disappeared; but piecing together the stories of the four nurses, this may be accepted as the truth of the story—there or thereabouts. Little Mark and his nurses were close together, while his twin, with *his* attendants, was at a distance of some fifty yards. Mark was toddling between the two women, having a hand of each, when suddenly, to the amazement of all, there came from a small, dense thicket close at hand, a savage growl. A moment later, amid a curious din of snarls, whines, and puppy-like barks, there darted from the cover a full-grown she-wolf, followed by six small cubs. Catching sight of little Count Paul and his two nurses, the mother-wolf, startled and alarmed, turned sharp round with a yelp—half growl, half whine—and fled as quickly as the little ones could make after her, and, skirting the patch of thick cover within which she and her cubs had lain hid, came suddenly upon little Mark and his escort of women-folk.

Mark's nurses shrieked and fled. Each made a frantic attempt to snatch up the child, who had strayed a few paces from them, and now stood between wolf and escort, but each woman in turn lost heart at sight of the snarling wolf within a few yards of them, and fled precipitately without quite reaching their precious charge. The second party of nurses had run away, carrying little Paul with them, so that poor, tiny Mark was left standing alone, abandoned to his fate, dazed with terror, too frightened, at first, to utter a sound. When the nurses had run forty or fifty yards, however, their hearts presumably smote them, for all turned round, white, panting, agitated.

'We must go back,' said the bravest of them; 'wolf or no wolf—little Mark is there!' All four women looked in one another's faces; Paul was crying lustily, his chief nurse was hugging him tightly to her breast; they had heard Mark crying as they ran. It was Mark's elder nurse who had spoken. 'You and I must return for him, Anna, at any rate,' she added, 'even if the others do not!'

'No; let us all go together,' said Clothilde, a Frenchwoman; 'we will go shouting!'

For each of those women it was a terrible ordeal to return to the spot where the wolf might still be waiting for them, but, to their credit, they braved the danger. They went shouting, as Clothilde had suggested. They cried out to the child Mark: '*Doosha*, lovie, where are you—shout to Anna—where are you?'

One of the women declared afterwards that she did actually hear a cry at about this moment, but the rest heard nothing. They crept slowly and timidly back, keeping as much as possible behind the pine-stems, calling aloud continually to Mark, and uttering threatening cries in hope of terrifying the savage beast which all had plainly seen.

But neither wolf nor child was visible. Had they mistaken the spot? No, there was the thicket, and there—oh, see!—was little Mark's cap, and several baskets of strawberries lay overturned close at hand. This was certainly the place.

'Mark—*Doosha*—sweetheart—where are you?' cried his nurses in desperation. One of them burst into uncontrollable tears, and a second followed suit. Paul lifted up his voice and bellowed in sympathy; possibly he did not understand much of what was happening, but he realised that matters were going wrong. Clothilde, hugging the child to her, took the lead of the pale women.

'Here he stood, in this spot—see, this was the little basket which he held in his hand—the wolf has taken him, that is what has happened. Oh, that a man were here, accustomed to tracking—maybe he might follow and find him before it is too late! Let us search the thicket—come, all!'

'Oh, I cannot,' cried one, Pologé, a girl of eighteen. 'I dare not. It is from there that the terrible beast sprang out; it is there that he now lurks. I cannot, I cannot!'

'Stay then, fool!' said Clothilde; 'here, take the child, I will enter the thicket. Come, you others—we will shout loudly; there is nothing to fear, wolves are cowards where there is noise.'

Three of the women entered the dense patch of woodland which we have called a thicket: they went very timidly at first, but gradually gathered courage and ransacked the place. They found the remains of a hare upon which the wolf had feasted, she and her bantlings.

'Then they will not eat our precious babe,' cried Anña, arguing correctly; 'they have carried him away, but there is yet time to find him. Let us go to the carriage and drive quickly homewards, then two of the gardeners can come back with us, bringing guns.'

'Stop a moment all!' cried Clothilde, suddenly; 'do not I hear something? Heaven grant it is not the baying of a wolf—listen all!'

Each woman listened, every nerve set, their knees trembling with terror, but their senses sharpened by its very intensity.

'Thank God!' said Anna presently, scarcely audibly; 'that is not a wolf's voice, it is a man's.'

'I hope it, but dare not think it,' murmured Clothilde; 'listen once more all.'

(*Continued on page* 15.)

A STORY OF SANNA'S POST.

THOUGH only a small force of our soldiers took part in the affair, one of the most remarkable fights that occurred during the Boer War was the conflict which is named from Sanna's Post. The heroes of the day were the officers and men of the Q Battery, Royal Horse Artillery.

When Horace Glasock, who was one of the men engaged, came home in September, 1900, with three bullets in his leg, he had a stirring tale to tell of his experiences on the 30th of March. He came from a soldier family: his grandfather fought and died for the Queen in the Crimean War, and his father lost a leg in battle. And this is his account of the event at Sanna's Post in his own words.

He had marched the night before, he said, from Thabanchu, and then rested for a few hours. 'About daybreak I was awakened by the sound of shells bursting; this was the first intimation we had that the enemy was near. Next, more shells and a hail of bullets. You know what a thunder-storm is like. That was it at Sanna's Post, only the lightning was live shells, and the heavy rain leaden bullets, not water. The whole camp was astir, but not a Boer was to be seen. They were hidden away in a *spruit*, and the sand of the ground was hit up as the surface of a lake is by big drops of rain. We found that we were completely entrapped, men and horses being mowed down. The volleys from the quick-firing guns were terrible. In company with others I moved forward some twelve-pounders, but the men were shot down as fast as they fired. When we had lost thirty men, and others were wounded, Major Hornsby gave the order to retire. Yes! it was a fact that I had six horses shot under me. After we had shifted two of the guns, and were doing all in our power to move another, I took down the two nearest horses I could get, but they were both hit, and I got a shot in the leg. Of course, I lost control of the horses, and away they bolted. Then I returned with my own pair, and was just going to hook them when the hand horse was killed, and the other wounded, so the pair came down. I managed to get away, and met Farrington, another of our men, bringing up a third pair of horses. Just then he was hit, and tumbled to the ground. Jack Lodge, the gunner, joined me, and we went on, but before we could fasten these horses both were struck by bullets, and I had to leap off quickly; there was nothing more to be done, for we had no horses besides these.

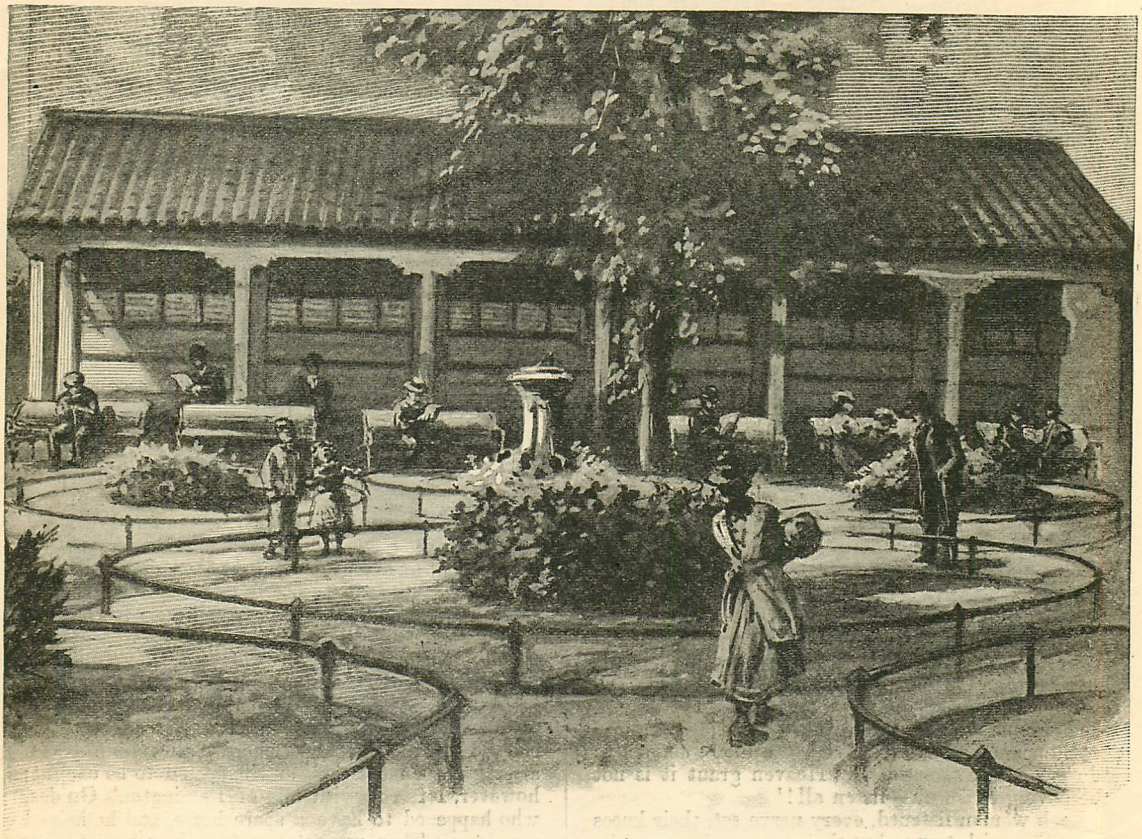
'Not being in much pain myself, I helped Farrington to the hospital, where I left him. Soon after I saw some Boers, and expected to be caught; however, I fell in with one of Remington's Guides, who happened to have a spare horse, and he helped me along. Then we got to a farm kept by a family named Joubert, said to be relatives of the great general. They were kind to us while we stopped.'

Later on, Horace Glasock was in a conflict at Diamond Hill, and there he was again wounded. For his courage at Sanna's Post he received the Victoria Cross.

HEROES OF DUTY.

I.—A GIRL HEROINE.

IN one of the busiest corners of London there is a quiet garden, green with little shrubberies that here and there shut out the busy life so near at hand. On one side a hundred windows of the General Post Office stare down into the little oasis, as though with wonder to see it there, and on the other three sides are noisy thoroughfares. In olden times it was the graveyard of a city church, but the green graves have been levelled, and the stone memorials preserved in rows round the walls. The place is



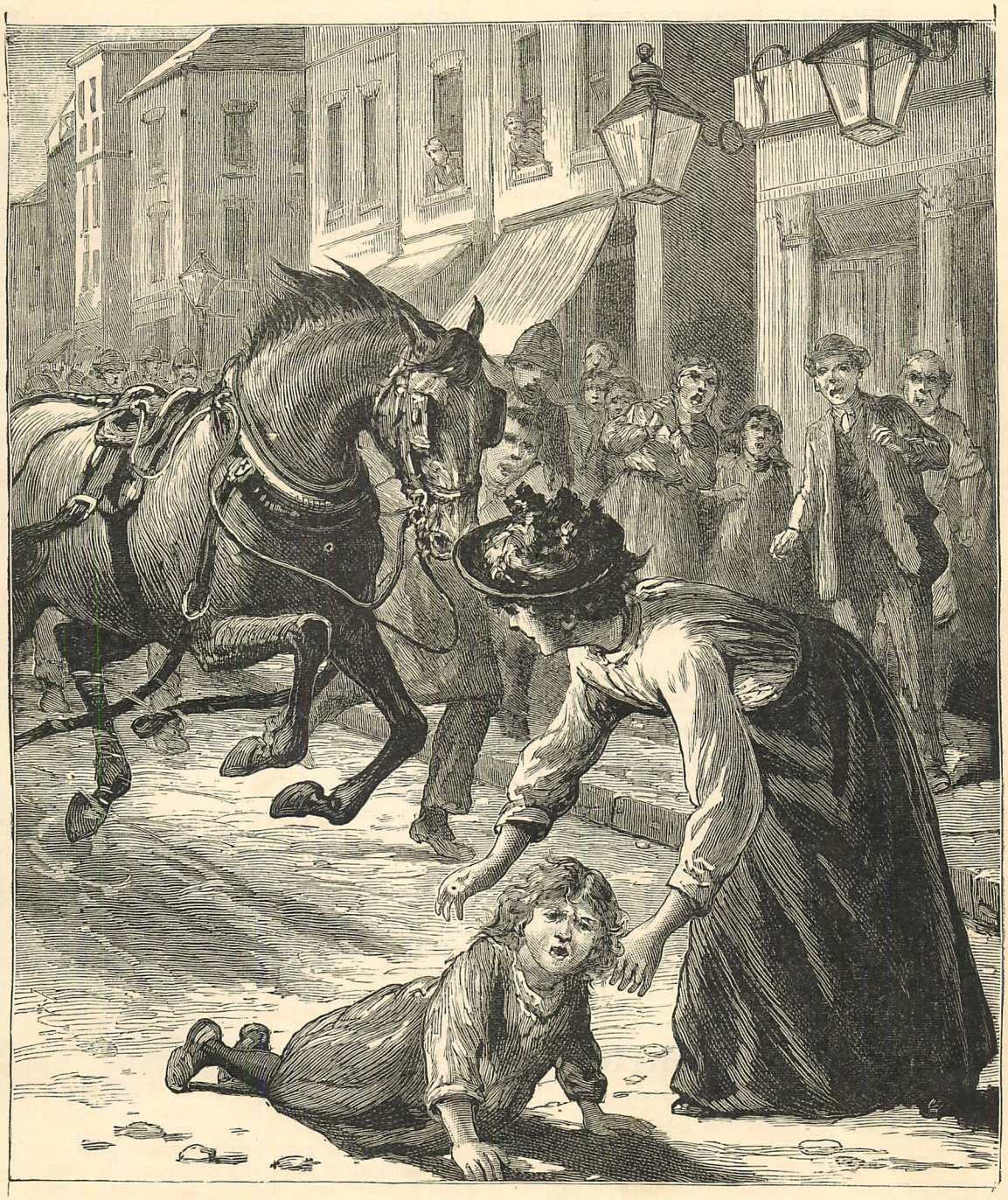
"The Postman's Park," London.

now called 'The Postman's Rest,' or 'The Postman's Park,' and is a welcome retreat for many London children who have no pleasant fields to play in. Some few years ago it was selected as a suitable spot in which to preserve the memories of heroic deeds of self-sacrifice, and the great artist, G. F. Watts, caused a little cloister to be erected, on the wall of which tablets are placed, recording the stories that all London children should hear and remember. A statuette of Watts himself is in the middle of the rows of tablets.

The tablets are very simply worded, and are without ornament or decoration to any marked extent. Just as the heroes and heroines themselves simply did their duty, without any grand preparations, or flourish of trumpets, without even the presence of any great event, like a war, or some danger in a far-off savage land, so do these inscriptions simply state that 'M. or N. lost his life in saving his brother from an advancing train,' or what not.

One of the first is the story of Elizabeth Boxall, a young girl of seventeen. Her home was in Bethnal Green, and one July day in 1887, her courage and thought for others wers put to the test —and not found wanting. While passing through a thoroughfare near her home, she was startled to hear a great uproar of voices, accompanied by the clattering of hoofs. A runaway horse, beyond all management, was dashing towards her. Scarcely had the young girl realised this fact, when she was horrified to see a little child in the roadway in imminent peril of death.

Without a moment's hesitation, Elizabeth Boxall darted through the scattering crowd; rushing forward, almost under the hoofs of the flying horse, she snatched at the dress of the terrified child, but the next moment lay stunned and wounded upon the roadway. One of those whirling, iron-shod hoofs had struck her on the leg, inflicting an injury that was to cause her death. Borne to her home by friendly hands, she made little of her hurt, but ere many months had passed, it became evident that if her life was to be saved the wounded limb must be amputated. With an interval of several months, twice the young heroine had to undergo



"She snatched at the dress of the child."

an operation, the second time proving too great a test for even *her* fortitude, and on June 20th, 1888, nearly a year (a year of constant suffering) from the date of her courageous act, so worthy of remembrance, she died. Surely the name of Elizabeth Boxall, on the wall of this little cloister in the 'Postman's Rest,' is one to be read with honour and admiration.

WEATHERWISE PLANTS.

WHEN the barometer or weather-glass had not been invented, people had other ways of discovering what the weather was likely to be. It was even more important to them in the olden time than it is to us now to find out when a storm of rain was approaching, for they had not the means of travelling we possess, nor could they protect their plants and their flocks as we can. So people looked after what we call natural signs of bad weather—the opening or shutting of leaves and flowers, or the cries and movements of various animals. These signs were probably not always to be depended upon, but even our weather-glass may mislead us.

But some plants are very true indicators of what the sky is going to do. The pretty little flower, long known as the shepherd's weather-glass, is generally to be relied upon. If its scarlet flowers are opened in the morning, a fine day is almost sure to follow. The common daisy has often been spoken of as a weatherwise plant, because it closes before rain. But the blossoms will close when a heavy cloud passes over, even if no rain falls, and they are often shut early in the evening. It is one of the flowers of spring, this daisy, or 'day's eye.' There was an old idea that spring had not arrived till twelve daisy flowers could be covered by one foot. The common dandelion is very sensitive to the weather; it closes up if there is heavy rain or wind. Lord Bacon noticed long ago that the low-growing chickweed closes its starry flowers before rain, warning the traveller to button up his coat.

Our woodland anemones, or wind-flowers, which brave the gales of March and April, curl up their petals before a shower, as well as at night. In the olden time, people said this was done by tiny fairies, who drew their flower curtains together to make themselves comfortable. If the downy bloom comes off the wild colt's-foot when there is no wind blowing, it is believed to show that a change of weather is near. The marigold is said to go to bed with the sun, but, in the morning, though the sun is up, if rain or thunder are approaching, it will not open its flowers. Along the hedgerows, should the big, white flowers of the great convolvulus be seen to close suddenly, it may be doubted whether the day will last fine. Altogether, there are many little signs about the weather, which we can use without the help of modern science.

THE PROTECTED COTTAGE.

A True Story from Switzerland.

SOME forty years ago, the inhabitants of the little town of Glaris had a fearful experience. One night they went to bed as usual, to be awakened some time after midnight by the alarming cry of 'Fire!' In a few moments every able-bodied person was on the spot where the fire was raging, struggling to prevent the further progress of the wild element.

How the fire originated was never known. The burning house was in the centre of the town. As it was a small house, and as such ready help was forthcoming, everybody hoped that the flames would soon be got under; but an unexpected danger was at hand.

Suddenly a roaring sound was heard in the distance, and the horror-struck people knew that their greatest foe, the föhn—not to be arrested by any human power—was approaching.

The 'föhn' is the name given to a very warm south wind, which at certain times of the year blows across some Alpine districts. Wherever it comes it has the strange power not only of kindling fire from smouldering ashes, but also of 'drawing' it almost magically. At the föhn's approach, all fires are immediately put out, as accidents would inevitably happen if this precaution were not observed.

But who could put out in a moment the fire of a burning house? The föhn advanced rapidly, blew over the fiery pile with its usual violence, and scattered burning splinters right and left over the unlucky town. Each spark kindled a fire, and in less than an hour Glaris was a mass of flames.

Help was sent at once from surrounding villages, and even from distant towns. In vain! When morning dawned, the once fair Glaris was a mere heap of ruins. In that one night, no less than five hundred dwellings had been destroyed. Little or nothing had been saved; the calamity had been too sudden to leave time for anything but a hasty flight.

And yet—is it possible?—one cottage stood entire amid those smouldering ruins. All the houses around it had been burned to the ground, but this one stood firmly, as if it had been miraculously protected.

It was indeed the hand of Providence which had guarded it. But why should that house have been so especially favoured? A beautiful story answers this question.

A rich man of Glaris, wishing to reward a very faithful servant, had built for him that house, in which he might dwell with his wife and child. The servant was also set up in a small independent business by his former master.

Years passed. The servant had an illness; then his business was neglected, for his wife had enough to do in caring for him and the household. When the poor man recovered, therefore, he found himself so deeply in debt that he saw no other course before him than to stop payment, when he would perhaps be sent to prison.

In his distress he remembered his benefactor, and, although reluctant to avail himself further of his generosity, resolved, for the sake of his wife and child, to go and tell his troubles to this kind friend.

The rich man gave him at once a sum more than sufficient to satisfy his creditors. To this he added a sum of equal value for the re-establishment of the poor man's business.

The servant, of course, was immensely grateful. From that moment he vowed in his heart that if ever it should be in his power to serve his benefactor he would do so, even at the cost of all that he possessed, and at the peril of his own life.

On that fearful night of the fire, the man's faithfulness was put to the test. The rich man's house did not escape the flames. Already it had begun to burn on two sides. The owner, sick, old, and infirm, was lying on his bed. Nobody was near him; every one was busy, trying to save his own life. Quietly, patiently, in this helpless condition, he awaited his apparently inevitable fate. The flames were already entering his room, when the door was suddenly opened, and in came the faithful servant. Carefully he lifted the old man from his bed, and carried him tenderly out of the burning house, out of the town, until he came to a village near, where he set him down in a cottage. The inmates of this cottage, who were known to the servant, promised to take good care of the old man until his deliverer should return.

The servant then went back in search of his wife and child, whom he had left in charge of a neighbour while he went to rescue his benefactor. He did not discover them until the next morning. Many families were scattered about the fields, homeless and destitute, waiting for succour.

But the faithful servant's cottage was standing unharmed amidst the general desolation. When the man saw this, he fell upon his knees in unutterable thankfulness, earnestly purposing that as he had hitherto served his earthly master, so henceforth he would give himself up body and soul to the service of that Heavenly Master Who had so wonderfully protected him and his.

As soon as things had settled down again, he brought his former master to his home, where he and his wife took care of him for the rest of his days.

'God helps those who help themselves,' says the proverb. Perhaps we might also say: God helps those who help others.

'A FEATHER IN ONE'S CAP.'

'A FEATHER in one's cap' carries with it a suggestion of light-heartedness and gaiety. Yet this phrase seems to have had its origin in war and bloodshed. It was the custom of the Hungarians, in their wars with the Turks, to wear a feather in their caps for every Turk whom they had killed.

THEY HAD NEVER QUARRELLED.

A CERTAIN couple went to Dunmow, in Essex, to claim the famous flitch of bacon, which once a year is given to every married pair who can swear that they have never quarrelled with one another. The judge, having awarded them a flitch, asked where they would put it. The husband produced a bag for the purpose.

'That is not nearly big enough to hold it,' said the judge.

'Just what I told my wife before we started,' answered the man, unguardedly, 'and we nearly came to blows over it!'

These unthinking words gave the judge good reason to alter his decision, and the flitch was hung up again to wait for another couple.

PUZZLERS FOR WISE HEADS.

1.—ARITHMOGRAPH.

A word of ten letters; the name of a race formerly in Palestine.

1.—1, 3, 4, 10. A heap.
2.—4, 5, 6, 7. A catalogue.
3.—6, 7, 8, 4, 10. A set of steps.
4.—1, 10, 9. An enclosure for animals.
5.—6, 8, 9. Wrong.
6.—9, 10, 6, 7. A sort of abode.
7.—1, 3, 9, 10. An evergreen tree.
8.—9, 5, 4, 10. An African river.
9.—1, 3, 9. One of the most useful things in the world.
10.—2, 3, 1. A wild fruit.

C. J. B.

[*Answer on page* 35.]

A MERRY CHRISTMAS.

THOUGH far away, across the foam,
From home and country dear,
Yet Jack must have his rightful share
Of Yuletide mirth and cheer.
So care to-night is cast aside,
And jollity abounds,
The very echoes seem to wake
With sweet harmonious sounds.

The fiddler briskly plies his bow,
His comrade plays the gay banjo,
The sailors trip it, in and out,
And up and down and round about;
'Tis surely well that joy should reign
When merry Christmas comes again.

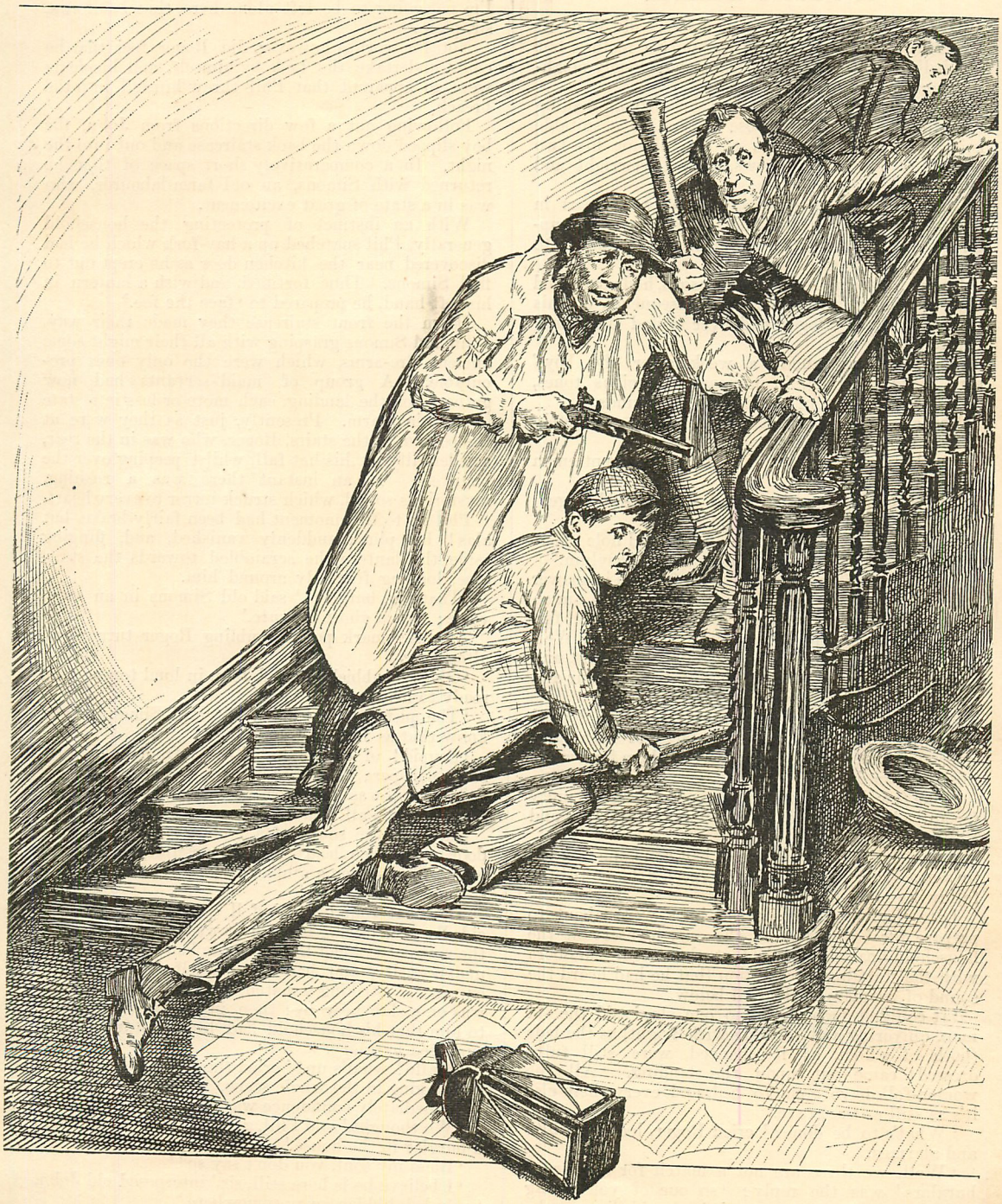
Save for the winds which moan and sigh,
All, all is peace to-night;
If wrongs there are, well, for a while
They seem forgotten quite;
The toiling hours, the storm, the stress
Have faded all away,—
For Jack, as everybody knows,
Can *work*, as well as play.

Then on the fiddler plies his bow,
His comrade plays the old banjo,
The sailors trip it, in and out,
And up and down, and round about;
'Tis surely well that peace should reign
When merry Christmas comes again.

But now and then there steals a hush,
'Twixt lightsome dance and song,
And thoughts fly far across the wave,
And Yuletide memories throng
To where, in village or in town,
The wife and children dwell,
Or aged parents, it may be,
Beloved by Jack so well.

Again the fiddler plies his bow,
His comrade plays his gay banjo,
The sailors trip it, in and out,
And up and down and round about;
'Tis surely well that love should reign
When merry Christmas comes again.

"So care to-night is cast aside, and jollity abounds."



"'That's no burglar!' said old Simons."

A NIGHT ALARM.

COLONEL DUNCAN, the master of Welford Manor, was considered not only a recluse, but decidedly eccentric, in the somewhat lonely neighbourhood where he dwelt.

Of late he had been thinking seriously of making his will, and, for the purpose of finding a suitable heir, he invited as guests to the Manor his two nearest of kin, his nephews, Phil Cartwright and Roger Bellew.

The lads, though cousins, were as wide apart in disposition as the poles, Phil being honest and upright to a degree, whilst Roger, at times, was apt to be decidedly unscrupulous.

Colonel Duncan, for various reasons, had quarrelled with all his relations, and in consequence of this neither Phil nor Roger had ever visited the Manor before.

One morning, about a week after the boys' arrival, the Colonel, in unusually gracious tones, asked their opinion of the house and grounds.

Phil answered enthusiastically, having completely fallen in love with the fine old place.

'And what say you?' Here the gentleman turned to Roger.

'It's a regular mansion, sir, I call it,' said Roger; 'anybody might be proud to possess it.'

To himself he added, 'Beastly dull old hole; if it were mine I'd sell it for a county lunatic asylum.'

'Perhaps you are right,' said the Colonel in answer to Roger's uttered remarks. 'At any rate, I am so proud of it myself that I am determined it shall fall into good hands when I am gone. The heir of Welford Manor must be a man after my own heart, and unless he possesses the qualities of both honour and courage, I will have naught to do with him.'

As Colonel Duncan said these words he looked keenly and critically into the faces of both lads, after which he turned away and left them for a while to their own devices.

Some few days later there came a fine opportunity for a display of courage on the part of both Phil and Roger.

The Colonel, as it happened, had gone one evening to see a friend, and was not expected home till the following morning.

Late that night, while the boys were about to prepare for bed, old John, the only manservant the household boasted, knocked at their bedroom doors with the startling information that he had heard the sound of burglars in the hall below.

'It couldn't have been no one else,' said the old man, quivering and shaking with fright, as the lads (both of whom, as it chanced, were still fully dressed) came out upon the landing. 'All the women-folk have gone to bed, and everywhere else it's as still as the grave.'

'What's to be done?' cried Roger, looking white and alarmed.

'Well, we three are not a match for a gang of burglars,' was the reply; 'so one of you young gentlemen must just go and fetch old Simons—he lives close and handy.'

'We will both go,' said Roger valiantly, snatching up his hat from a chair in his bedroom.

'No, no!' cried the old man, 'that you mustn't! I'm not going to be left alone here, that I tell you, sir, plain.'

Not for worlds, however, did Roger feel that he could undertake the task by himself, and his fears were so apparent that Phil threw himself into the breach.

Following out a few directions from John, the boy slipped down the back staircase and out into the night. In a comparatively short space of time he returned with Simons, an old farm-labourer, who was in a state of great excitement.

With an instinct of protecting the household generally, Phil snatched up a hay-fork which he had discovered near the kitchen door as he crept out to find Simons. Thus fortified, and with a lantern in his left hand, he prepared to 'face the foe.'

Down the front staircase they made their way, John and Simons grasping with all their might some ancient fire-arms, which were the only ones procurable. A group of maid-servants had now gathered on the landing, each more or less in a state of frantic alarm. Presently, just as they were at the bottom of the stairs, Roger, who was in the rear, accidentally let his hat fall, whilst peeping over the banisters. In an instant there was a rushing, mysterious sound, which struck terror to every heart.

Phil up to this moment had been fairly brave, but alas! his pluck suddenly vanished, and, flinging aside the lantern, he scrambled towards the staircase, looking fearfully around him.

'That's no burglar!' said old Simons in an awed voice; ''tis a ghost for sure.'

At this remark poor trembling Roger turned tail altogether.

'Ghost! rubbish!' cried John in loud tones; 'get ready to fire, man!'

'The pistol isn't loaded,' retorted Simons; 'you know that as well as I do.'

'Stupid! of course I do'—this from John, in a stage whisper; 'I said that for the burglars to hear.'

The lamp was now burning dim in the hall; in a few moments all would be in utter darkness.

Suddenly the sound of a footstep near the library door made each heart beat, if possible, faster than ever. Then came a scuffle, and—horror of horrors!—the lamp went out!

The next sound which fell on their ears was decidedly a surprising one, for it was none other than the voice of Colonel Duncan, who had returned home unexpectedly, and had let himself in at the side entrance. Striking a match, he lit a candle which was on a slab near by; then, in an instant, it came to him that his household had been disturbed by a supposed burglary.

'Hullo! what's up?' cried the Colonel, his amused eyes taking in the whole scene.

Immediately confidence was restored.

'We thought,' said Phil, gaspingly, 'that there was a burglar in the house.'

'Bless my soul, you don't say so!'

'I believe he is here still, sir,' interposed old John, 'only he's hidden away somewhere.'

'Don't alarm yourself, John,' said his master, soothingly; 'you have all done your best, no doubt, but the cat caught the burglar after all.'

And so it proved, for the intruder was none other than a huge rat!

* * * * *

'Well, lads, you had a scare last night,' said the Colonel next morning at breakfast. 'I suppose it made you feel a bit funky, didn't it?'

Roger, mindful of his kinsman's admiration of courage, and wishing to stand well with him, answered in a confident voice: 'I was not a bit frightened, sir,' said he; 'I felt we were a match for a *dozen* burglars.'

'H'm! what about you, Phil?'

Phil looked shamefaced, but nevertheless told the truth bravely.

'I'm afraid you will think me an awful coward, sir,' he replied, 'but I felt almost as if my last hour had come.'

The Colonel, who had heard the ins-and-outs of the whole story from John, smiled benignly.

'I shall never think a lad a coward who is brave enough to tell the truth,' said he, meaningly—at which remark Roger felt very small indeed.

* * * * *

Years have come and gone since the 'burglary' incident, and Phil, whom the Colonel has grown to love as his own son, is now his acknowledged heir. Thus the night alarm at Welford Manor, in which nobody particularly distinguished himself, proved—to one member of the household, at least—a blessing in disguise.

THE OLD RUBBER BALL.

'WELL, this is quite monotonous,'
With sadness sighed the ball;
'It seems that Tom and Jessica
Don't care for me at all.
It must be quite a month ago
Since, in this play-box dim,
They tossed me with the strange remark:
"Well, that's the end of *him!*"

'And yet when first I reached this place,
How distinctly I recall,
They bounced me on the play-room floor
With, "What a lovely ball!"
They tossed me up toward the sky,
They lodged me in the spout,
And all around the pleasant lawn
They batted me about.

'But once, upon a summer day,
A sad thing came to pass,
For, playing by the garden-house,
They kicked me through the glass!
I hear the shattered splinters fall,
I feel a pang of pain,
And from that hour my painted coat
Was never whole again.

'But worse and worse the damage grew;
The colours peeled away,
And I must own the bitter truth,
That I have had my day.
My bounce is gone, my rubber sides
Are flabby, sunk, and slim,
And that is why they tossed me here
With, "That's the end of *him!*"'

LITTLE GIANTS OF LABOUR.

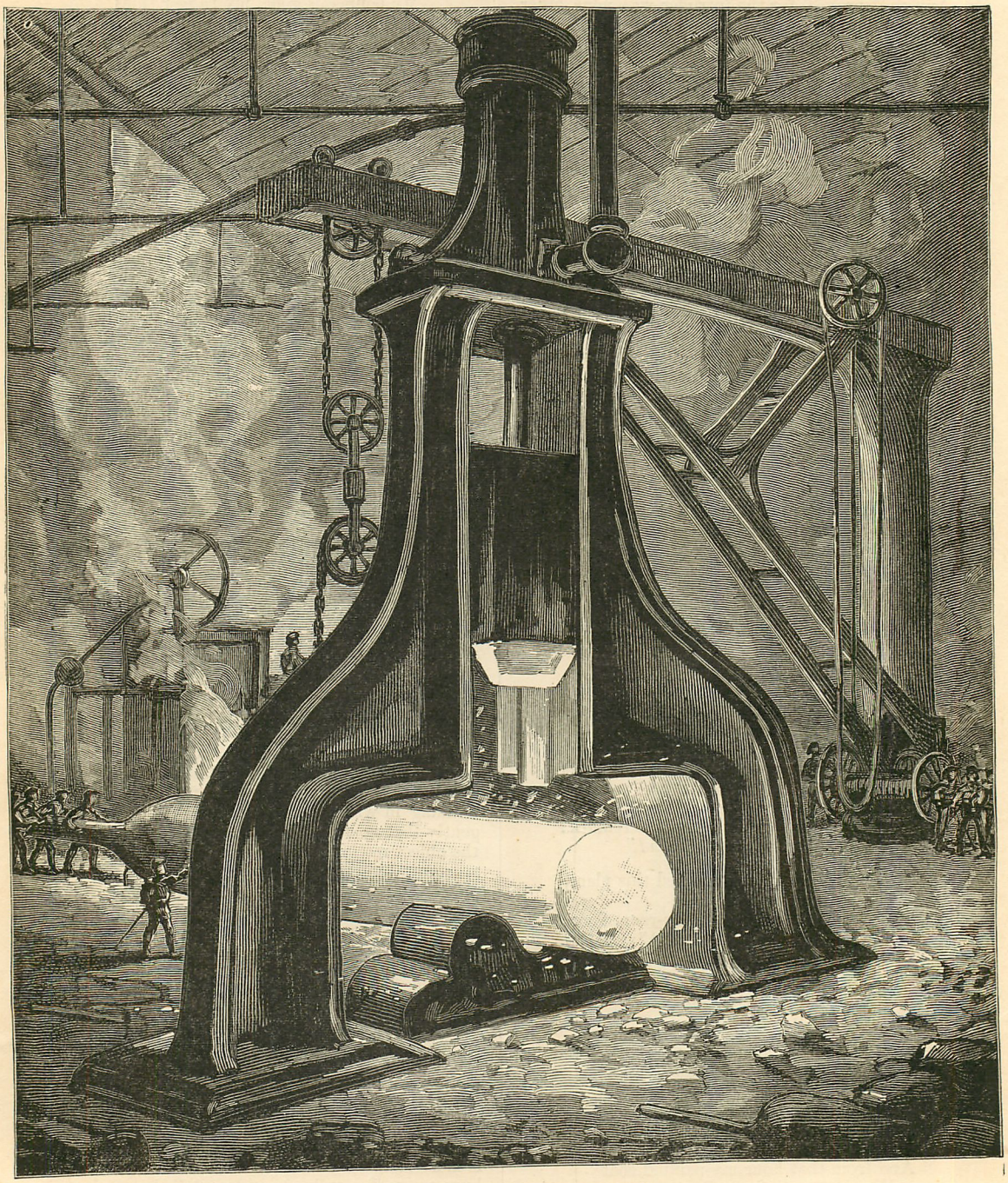
I.

IF all the tiny models at South Kensington Museum were at work in earnest, instead of being there only to show how the work is done by those they represent, it would be the busiest place on earth. Pile-drivers are laying the foundations for imaginary buildings, locomotives are racing along on imaginary journeys, pumps are lifting water from imaginary mines, and steam hammers are forging away on imaginary hot iron. But among the miniature uproar we will stop to-day to look at

THE STEAM-HAMMER.

At a great exhibition held in London many years ago, the sightseers would loiter in large crowds to watch the performance of one of the 'exhibits.' It was Mr. James Nasmyth's recent invention, the steam-hammer. Between two ponderous steel supports a huge block of metal, called the hammer-head, was raised and lowered by steam-power. The workman stood on a raised platform, and by means of a short lever controlled the movements of the hammer to the greatest nicety. So obedient was the giant to his commands, that, while it was capable of striking a blow to shake the foundations of the building in which it stood, it would rise and fall so gently that no sound could be heard when it struck the object resting on the anvil beneath. There were spectators among the crowd who were willing to place their golden watches on the anvil for the steam-hammer to pound away at (after they had seen the feat performed on the inventor's own watch). Measurements having been taken by the man on the platform, the steel head was allowed to descend at a speed too rapid for sight to follow, but was instantly checked by the lever when it had reached the bubble-like glass of the watch-case. So exact were the calculations, that when the 'blow' had been struck the watch could not be drawn from between the hammer and the anvil, yet the glass was not cracked.

But the steam-hammer is a serious worker as well. In all the great arsenals and iron-works of the world these hammers are to be seen. At Woolwich there is more than one, and it is a beautiful sight to see a huge mass of glowing metal modelled into shape by the rapid blows of the giant. The progress in ship-building, in the manufacture of big guns, and all industries in which heavy bodies of metal have to be dealt with, has been greatly aided by the steam-hammer. As first invented, the weight of the



Nasmyth's Steam Hammer at Work.

hammer-head alone was considered sufficient to deal the blows, but later on steam was used to drive it down with greater force, in addition to its original duty of merely raising it from the anvil.

The model at South Kensington is only called upon to exhibit its powers when the little button in the framework of the glass case is pressed. So long as you hold that button down it will hammer away

"They bounded hastily down the street."

upon the piece of red rubber on its anvil. The anvil on which it strikes is not part of the framework, but passes through it to rest on the ground, which thus receives the shock of the blows.

Unlike other tools, the steam-hammer is generally erected upon a foundation of its own, formed of heavy timbers, so that, when at work, it shall not damage the building in which it stands.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

True Tales of the Year 1807.

I.—THE ROBBERY OF THE BRISTOL MAIL.

THERE was the usual crowd of onlookers, at the Gloucester Coffee-house in Piccadilly to see the start of the Mail Coaches which ran on the Western road, and indeed it was a sight worth seeing, for in this year of 1807 coach travelling was rapidly approaching perfection. The glossy, well-groomed horses, the gaily-painted coaches, and the smart guard, heavily armed and wearing his Majesty's uniform as guardian of the Royal Mails, made such a picture as livened up the grey London streets, and made each British heart beat with pride to think that in no other country in the world could travelling be done with such speed and punctuality.

'Ten miles an hour, and kept up all along the road! The coaches arrive pretty well to the minute!' boasted a friend to a young man from the country to whom he was showing the sights of London.

And the countryman looked and marvelled, and felt that the very summit of quick travelling had surely been attained, and that to go quicker would be impossible. What would he have thought if he could have looked ahead a hundred years and seen our express trains and our motor cars!

But to return to the mail coaches. One after another had driven off, and now the last, the Bristol Mail, was about to leave the yard. The coachman, gruff and very red in the face, and almost smothered in a great-coat with innumerable capes, had just told the ostler to 'Give the 'orses their 'eads, Bob!' when two well-dressed young men, with glossy beavers and gold-headed canes, rushed quickly up.

'Any room inside, guard?' they inquired hastily. 'Can we have a cast as far as Maidenhead?'

'Plenty of room inside, gentleman,' answered the guard, as he held open the coach door. 'It so happens we've none but outsides to-day—summer time, you see. It's different in winter—then mostly it's the inside that fills up.'

Then the door was banged to, and the coach started off without further delay.

At Maidenhead, where the coach stopped to change horses, the two travellers inside the coach got out and walked quickly away, attracting no notice from any one, as all eyes were fixed on the fresh horses which stood awaiting the coach, and which were being put to, with lightning speed, by the ostlers, who took no small pride in the rapidity with which they could accomplish their business.

There is a steep hill outside Maidenhead, and here both coachman and guard dismounted to ease the horses, and walked leisurely side by side for a gossip.

'What sort of chaps were your "insides," Jem?' said the red-faced coachman. 'I saw their backs as they left the court-yard—but I never saw their faces.'

The guard stopped a minute, looked hard at the coachman, and said suddenly, 'No more did I, though I opened the door for them to get in! One held his hat before his face, so as the beaver shouldn't get rubbed against the door, and the other had his handkerchief out as if to sneeze. It was all done so quick—we were just starting. I suppose they were all right, eh?' The guard looked inquiringly at his friend.

'How can I say?' returned the coachman gruffly. 'There is so many queer gentry on the road now-a-days.'

'Just stop your horses one minute, Jem,' begged the guard, now really alarmed. 'Let's just overhaul the mail-bag and see if everything is there.'

So the coach was halted, and a careful examination made of the bags and the luggage in the boot. Nothing was missing—all was as stated in the way-bill which the guard held in his hand whilst the coachman counted the bags.

'That's all right,' said the coachman as the guard banged-to the boot; 'now we can start. We've lost four minutes over that job, Jem; how I'm to make it up between this and Reading I don't know.'

'Oh, you'll do it somehow!' said the guard reassuringly—when suddenly he turned deadly pale, for his eyes happened to rest on the inside of the coach, which appeared in the greatest confusion. The seats had been cut and wrenched open, and wood and upholstering were scattered about.

'They've robbed the secret drawer!' exclaimed the guard in dismay, 'and there was a parcel of diamonds in it; Mr. Smith of Hatton Garden made it over to me this morning. I never gave the diamonds a thought. I felt so sure they would be safe in there! Look here, Jem,' went on the poor man, who was in a terrible state of agitation, 'you must let me have one of the leaders; I must canter back to Maidenhead and set the runners on the track. We've found the robbery out so soon that there is a good chance of catching the men.'

As he spoke he had unbuckled the traces of one of the two leading horses, and almost before the gruff coachman could say 'yes' or 'no,' the guard was clattering down the steep hill towards the 'Saracen's Head' inn at Maidenhead.

As his horse's hoofs sounded on the cobbles of the inn yard, two men, seated by the coffee-room window, looked quickly up, and, catching sight of the guard's red coat, they threw open the window and bounded hastily down the street.

'That's them!—stop thief!—stop them! They've robbed the mail,' shouted the guard, as he tore madly after them, followed by numberless grooms and ostlers who were hanging about the inn. The chase was a keen one, and one man, who must have known his way about, managed to escape capture, but the other, making for a blind alley, was soon secured, and lodged in Maidenhead Jail. He had ninety pounds in gold and one of the missing parcels of diamonds hidden in his boot, so his guilt was plain; at the next assizes he was proved to have been an old convict, and received a sentence of transportation for life.

'HE'S A BRICK!'

THIS phrase has been traced by some learned philologist to a King of Sparta who lived and reigned four centuries B.C. A visitor to Lacedæmon, the Spartan capital, being greatly surprised to find

that the city had no walls, asked the king what he would do in the event of an invasion.

'Sparta,' replied the king, 'has fifty thousand soldiers, and each man is a brick.'

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 3.)

FROM far away came a repetition of the sound which the women had heard. Though still distant, there was now no mistaking the sound: it was a man's voice.

'Yes, it is a man!' said Clothilde; 'let us shout back, all four together, so that he may hear what we say. When I have counted three, all cry together "*Sooda skoray!*"' ('Hither quickly!').

Clothilde counted, and all three women shouted together '*Sooda skoray!*'

The man instantly replied. '*Idoo!*' ('I am coming') he shouted. His voice sounded a little nearer than before. The women waited anxiously.

'God grant it may be some one who knows woodcraft, and not a mere ignorant peasant from the village,' whispered Anna. The four nurses were now too agitated to speak. They waited in breathless silence.

'*Gdyé vui?*' ('Where are you?') shouted the man, now quite close at hand, and all found their tongues and shouted. Now the crushing of twigs and the sound of a heavy tramp became audible.

'He is coming,' whispered Clothilde. 'If only——'

Clothilde's sentence was never finished, for at this moment a marvellous thing happened. A child's cry uprose, and following it a man's voice, soothing it. Clothilde's white face flushed.

'Dear Heaven!' said Anna. 'If he had found—but no, that cannot be.'

'Of course not,' said Clothilde, austerely; 'it is a peasant with his own child, that is all.'

'No, no,' cried Anna, 'it is Mark; it is our sweetheart! Do you think I do not know his voice? *Doosha!*' she almost shouted, 'Anna is here—come!' She rushed frantically through the trees, the rest following.

The next moment there came through the cover one Peter Shoorin, a peasant from the neighbouring village, and in his arms he carried little Mark. The child cried lustily, and the women uttered exclamations of horror as they perceived that there were undoubted stains of blood upon his right shoulder and arm. They rushed and caught him from Peter's arms; they kissed and cuddled him, they cried over him, soothed him, saw to his wound and cried again over that.

Peter laughed surlily. 'Ah,' he said, 'you shed tears because the child is hurt, but why could you not take better care of him? Four of you to protect two little ones, yet you cannot keep him out of the jaws of a wolf!'

'One does not think of wolves among the strawberries and lilies of the valley,' said Clothilde. 'Do not preach to us, but let us hear how you found the child.'

The party were now making their way to the house, Anna carrying the child in the midst; Peter walked with them.

'As to preaching, see if I do not preach to the Countess,' he replied. 'It is not right that careless women should have charge of lives so precious as these. And as to how I found the child, I shall tell my tale to the Countess herself. Let the guilty be punished, but let those who deserve reward receive it. One does not save a child from the wolves without danger to oneself.'

The tale which Peter now told to the Countess was dramatic enough, and it filled the mother's heart with both horror and indignation. Peter described how he had been walking home to the village through the forest when, hearing a rustling in the brushwood some thirty yards away, he looked up, and was startled by an extraordinary sight. A large wolf trotted slowly along followed by several little ones, and in her mouth she carried something which emitted cries of terror. 'On observing it carefully, I perceived this to be a human child,' said Peter—'a helpless infant that cried aloud to me, as it seemed, for help. I shouted and rushed forward, and by the mercy of God the great beast dropped its burden, snarled savagely at me once or twice, then lost heart and made off, followed by its cubs, and leaving the little child crying upon the ground. Imagine my horror, Madam,' Peter ended, 'to perceive that the savage brute had had the audacity to seize and carry away one of our little lords—the Count Mark! Thanks be to Heaven he is unhurt, save for the wound in the upper arm and shoulder, where the wolf seized him! I soothed the precious child, Madam, as well as I could, but he suffered much pain and terror, and certainly it is terrible to think what might have happened if, by the mercy of Heaven, I had not chanced to pass by at the time!'

This was true, and the Countess did not fail to reward Peter handsomely. She did more, she gave him the profitable appointment of head forester upon the estate, a position in which Peter had ample opportunity of becoming well acquainted with his master, the Count, who loved to shoot and hunt occasionally in his forests. Peter thus became, before long, a valued servant and friend of the family, and was destined to play, later on, an important part in some of the exciting adventures of which I shall have to tell you.

As for little Count Mark, he soon recovered from his terror and forgot all about the incident. His shoulder was painful, however, for a few weeks, and the scar which remained to remind his elders of his terrible adventure was a deep and ugly one. That scar was destined to be a valuable possession to the lad in after years, and to play a certain part at a critical stage of his existence, when identification as Count Mark Stirinof meant all the world to him.

Of all these things you shall hear in due course; but first I must tell you of one or two other things—incidents and adventures which led up to the main development of this history of the twin brothers. We will follow the two little streams, as it were, of their separate lives for a short way, before they join in the main channel of exciting adventure which is the true course of my tale.

(*Continued on page* 17.)

"In his arms he carried little Mark."

"Paul was playing by her side, but Mark was not to be seen."

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 15.)

CHAPTER II.

WE must now skip a further period of two years. The twins have grown from babies of two years old into sturdy little fellows of four, able to do most things open to boys of that age, and possessing a certain independence of spirit which was perhaps somewhat remarkable. They were marvellously alike at this time, and the Count once laughingly observed to his wife that it was lucky Mark's shoulder had been scarred by the wolf's teeth, for otherwise it would be difficult to prove the identity of either in case one should wish to pass as the other. The remark was made in jest, but the Count did not guess how great a part that scar of Mark's was destined to play at a certain critical time.

'I don't know what they will be like when they grow up,' the Count added, referring to the remarkable independence of their two little sons. 'The worst of it is, there is not much room in Russia for independence; it is not much liked or encouraged by the Tsar and his ministers. The Tsar likes to drive his own apple-cart, as you say in England, and no one else may touch the reins!'

'We need not think of that yet,' the Countess laughed. 'So long as we can keep them out of mischief while they are boys, they may be left to take care of themselves when they grow up into men!'

But, alas! there were bitter days in store for the poor Countess, and she was soon to learn that to keep the children out of mischief even in the days of their childhood was to prove too great a task for those in whose care they were placed.

The forest, outside the park, had been made 'out of bounds' since the day of Mark's adventure with the wolf.

'For, though it is scarcely probable,' said the Count, 'that wolves will be seen again in this district, especially now that Peter has been made Ranger, with special orders to keep them down, yet I think it may be wiser to forbid the nurses and servants to run the risk of taking the children into the woods again. Where wolves have been seen once, they may be seen again; the brutes come and go. In the winter it is easy to know of their presence by the tracks in the snow, but in the summer, as now, it is difficult.'

Thus the forest, as a place of picnicking, had now been barred for two years, and the strawberries and lilies bloomed in vain in so far as the children were concerned, though picnics were constantly held just outside the limits of the forest land, on which occasions the two little Counts were left in charge of a portion of their escort while two or three entered the forbidden area in order to reap in nature's flower and fruit garden. But the day came when the independent spirit of little Mark asserted itself. He had seen the nurse-women return from among the dark pines laden with luscious strawberries, of which they gave him sparingly. He thirsted for more. After lunch, three of the four women returned to the wood, leaving the fourth to watch the two boys, who played around and picked the buttercups and daisies. Now, this woman, being a Russian, felt sleepy after the midday meal, and before very long she had dropped off, as nine out of ten of her nationality do at this time of day, into a sound slumber. When she awoke, little Paul was playing by her side, but Mark was not to be seen.

Proskovia jumped to her feet in alarm; she called for Mark, but there was no reply. Little Paul, when asked, wildly, for information, pointed to the wood and said, 'He has gone there, where Clothilde and Pologé are.'

Proskovia remembered well the dreadful occurrence of two years ago. It had been a nightmare to all the household ever since, and naturally at this terrible moment the memory of that day returned to her. 'Dear Heaven!' she murmured distractedly, 'what if there are wolves in the forest again, and the little Count has——' In her frenzy of terror she rushed to the edge of the forest; she shouted Mark's name and the names of the two women. No child's voice replied, but presently a woman answered in the distance, 'We are here! What is the matter?'

'The little Count Mark,' Proskovia shrieked, 'is he with you?'

After a pause came the reply, 'We have not seen him.'

A few minutes later the three women came running out of the wood to find poor Proskovia almost distracted with fear and anguish. 'I fell asleep,' she sobbed, 'and he went into the wood, and the wolves have found him.'

'Proskovia, you are a fool,' said Clothilde; 'there are no wolves; we have been in the woods all the afternoon, and there have been no wolves; it is nonsense. How do you know that the Count Mark is in the wood?'

'His brother saw him go. Ask him. Is it not true, Paul?'

'Mark said, "I will go and find Clothilde and eat strawberries,"' said Paul.

'Then in the forest we will seek him,' said Clothilde. 'Carry little Paul, Proskovia, since it is your fault that we must take this trouble. Come all into the forest, and we shall soon find him. We will go in two directions and shout his name. Come!'

So the four women returned into the forest; they walked this way and that, and shouted till they were hoarse; and as the minutes lengthened into half an hour, and there was no reply to their shouts, their hearts sank very low indeed. Clothilde and Pologé remembered only too well the tragedy of two years ago. Could wolves have appeared a second time, and a second time have found and fallen upon the unfortunate child? Wolves were rare here; during the last two years Peter had only reported their presence in the district once or twice. Nevertheless, as all know, wolves do not send notice of their intention to arrive; a few stragglers might easily visit the Knasny forest and Peter be none the wiser.

'It cannot have been wolves,' said Clothilde;

'there are no wolves—at least, we have heard of none. He has strayed, eating strawberries, and when we call he dare not reply because he knows he has done wrong! Let us continue to search until we find him. Shout only kind and affectionate words, not threats!'

An hour and a half later, up at the great wooden house, half palace and half barracks, which was the home of Count and Countess Stirinof, the Countess began to grow anxious. Dusk was coming on, and the children and nurses had not returned. A German lady, her companion, was reading to the Countess, who suddenly stopped her.

'I think I hear them arriving,' she said. 'Stay, some one is crying. Look out of the window, Fraulein, and see who it is!'

The fraulein obeyed. She uttered an exclamation as she looked out of the window.

'I—I think it is the nurses,' she hesitated; 'a group of women are coming through the garden.'

The Countess sprang to the window and looked out. A strange sense of terror seemed to paralyse her heart. The women were crying. Had anything happened? She tried to speak calmly.

'Yes, it is the nurses,' she said; 'they cry and wail aloud. Ah, there is Paul—or is it Mark? But, then, where is the other? My children, my children! Come, Fraulein. Heaven grant no disaster has happened!'

'Be calm, Madam, be calm!' cried the attendant. 'Be sure that all is well. What could happen to the children?'

'Oh, the lake, the lake!' murmured the Countess as she flew down the wide stairs, across the great hall, and into the garden by the side door. 'Something tells me little Paul is drowned—or Mark. Well,' to the nurses, who were by this time close to the house, 'what is the matter? Stay; give me the child; it is Paul, I see. Speak, you Clothilde, you generally have a head on your shoulders, where is Mark? Answer quickly, has anything happened? Why do you weep? and you, Pologé—in pity speak—has he fallen into the water? He may be saved.'

Clothilde swallowed her sobs and replied for the rest.

'Disaster, disaster, Madam! One is taken, and the other left. Thank God both are not taken, and we ourselves also, though I know not whether that would not be better as far as we are concerned, miserable women that we are! The Count Mark has gone, but his twin is safe.'

'Gone!' repeated the poor mother, frenziedly. 'What mean you, woman—gone whither? Fraulein, make her speak; you stand like a mummy, doing and saying nothing.'

As a matter of fact, the poor Fraulein was paralysed with horror, and could scarcely utter a word, even now when directly commanded to do so.

'Speak, please, Clothilde, or you, Proskovia—do you not see that Madam is distracted and terrified? What has happened? Can anything be done?'

'The wolves, the wolves, Fraulein! He wandered into the wood, and there is little doubt that he is taken. There is nothing to be done but to tear the hair. We shall see the little Count Mark no more. Thank God that the other is safe.'

The poor Countess uttered a shriek. 'You rave, fool, you rave!' she cried. 'There are no wolves in the district; if so, we should have been told of it by the hunter, Peter. Speak quickly, any one who is sane; describe exactly what has happened.'

Clothilde, as usual, spoke for the rest. 'Madam, the little Count Mark strayed into the wood unobserved. We followed quickly, but, though we searched for an hour—two hours, and more—we found no trace of him. Then suddenly Peter met us in the wood. "What is the matter?" says he. We tell him: little Count Mark has disappeared. "Alas!" says he, "I was on my way to tell the Count that I have seen the track of wolves. Truly, the little Count is unfortunate. Can he have been taken by them a second time? A disaster, indeed! Go back and tell the Countess what has happened. As for me, I will return and do my best to follow the track of the wolves; but it is difficult to see their footmarks in summer when the ground is hard." Peter is even now following their tracks, Madam,' Clothilde ended. 'There is just that much hope, and no more.'

(*Continued on page* 26.)

THE IMPATIENT BEE.

'I SHALL never get it finished,' said the bee,
As he flitted from a pansy to a rose;
'For the dandelion clock is striking three,
And the sun will soon be seeking his repose.

'There are blossoms in the garden, quite a score;
There are nine-and-twenty lilacs in the lane.
Hark! the dandelion clock is striking four,
And my efforts will be absolutely vain!'

On, on he went, the crossest bee alive,
To pause again, and sorrowfully say:
'There! the dandelion clock is striking five?
I shall *never* get it finished in the day.'

At six I saw him settle on a pink,
At seven he was buzzing round the lime;
But the duties of his day, he seemed to think,
Were more than he could finish in the time.

Yet when to bed the summer sun was gone,
And nine o'clock rang out a cheerful chime,
The bee no longer flew by grove and lawn—
His daily duty finished true to time.

Now, don't you think his labour would have proved
Much easier if he had learned to show
A patient spirit everywhere he roved,
Instead of such anxiety and woe?

A STRANGE FAMILY.

A True Anecdote.

A READER of *Chatterbox*, aged twelve, sends the following anecdote of his pets:—

'My uncle gave me a shilling to buy two young rabbits, which I brought home and placed beside

A Strange Family.

my sister's cat; she received them kindly, as if they were her own. The following morning I went down to the hutch, scarcely thinking that my rabbits would be alive: great was my surprise when I saw the cat sitting happily with the kitten and my rabbits. It proved very interesting to watch them play. Many people came to see them, as they were considered a curiosity.'

"He cut the wire."

A LAST EFFORT.

A COLONIST in Australia was inspecting his sheep on a distant part of his farm. Twenty miles separated him from the homestead, for in those parts a 'paddock' may be ten or twelve miles in extent. There are seldom any visible fences to these wide feeding-grounds; they are usually bounded by a forest or river. In fact, in the centre of one of these 'paddocks' there may be a wood of sufficient

size to allow a man to get lost therein, and lose all sense of his whereabouts.

The colonist, however, felt sure of his way, and he guided the horse he rode into the wood that skirted the enclosure. Further and further he went, until the sun sank down; then it occurred to him that perhaps he had missed his way.

He retraced his steps, and sought to find again the point from which he started. Darkness fell, and yet he had not found it. That night he tied his horse to a tree, and slept in the woods. All the next day he wandered, but he had entered one of those almost unexplored patches of forest which baffle the most expert traveller if alone. If others are with him the exit is easy: three men, for example, will form a 'bee-line'—one behind another, a hundred or fifty paces separating each; the first man forges ahead, and the last man keeps the line straight by calling out, 'A little to the right,' 'A point more eastward,' and so on. In this way the three men will pierce the wood like an arrow, and are bound to come out somewhere; but a solitary traveller may wander round in circles, thinking all the time that he is going straight. The changing position of the sun confuses him.

Our colonist eventually gave up in despair. He let loose his horse, and sank down at the foot of a tree. He was hungry and exhausted. But, ere he slept, his eyes wandered up amid the tops of the trees. He saw something which aroused him—a thin line of wire stretching from tree to tree. He knew it at once to be a telegraph wire, which connected the two neighbouring townships.

Mustering his failing strength, he arose and climbed the tree, cut the wire, then descended, and sank into a stupor which might have been a prelude to death.

Two days later a party of men came along to discover the fault in the wire, and repair it. They found the colonist lying insensible beneath. Their arrival was mercifully the means of saving his life.

AN ELABORATE EPITAPH.

IN Aberconway churchyard there is this curious epitaph on a watchmaker:

'Here lies in a "horizontal position," the "outside case" of "Peter Pendulum, watch-maker," whose abilities in that line were an honour to his profession; integrity was the "mainspring," and prudence the "regulator" of all the actions of his life. Humane, generous, and liberal, his "hand never stopped" till he had relieved distress. So nicely "regulated" were his "movements" that he never went wrong, except when "set-a-going" by people who did not know "his key."

'Even then he was easily "set right" again. He had the art of disposing his time so well, that his "hours" glided away "in one continued round" of pleasure and delight, till an unlucky "minute" putting a period to his existence, he departed this life, "wound up," in hopes of being "taken in hand" by his "Maker," and of being thoroughly "cleaned," "repaired," and "set-a-going" in the world to come.'

ANECDOTE OF GORDON.

GENERAL GORDON was a brave and good soldier. He always liked children, especially boys. The boys were so fond of him that they scribbled on the palings: 'God bless our colonel.' He made his house into a hospital, and was always giving alms. He had a map of the world hung over the mantel-piece covered all over with pins. One day a friend came to his house and asked him why he had the pins stuck all over the map, and he said: 'Oh! I put those pins in the places where my pupils are. When they move, I move the pins, so I always know where they are. Every night I offer up a prayer for them.'

HEROINES OF THE CIVIL WAR.

I.—QUEEN HENRIETTA MARIA.

IT is I, Françoise Caudet, who was waiting-woman to her Royal Highness Queen Henrietta Maria, who tell this story, for I am an old woman now, and before I die I would fain tell to all the world the account of how she brought money and stores to aid her Royal husband at the risk of life itself.

'Twas in 1642, and King Charles was in sore straits for lack of money, for the Roundheads (as we called the Puritans, because of the way in which they cropped their hair) had seized his revenues, and his fortresses, and even his ships, so that he hardly knew how to provide arms and provisions for his soldiers, or how their wages were to be paid.

He was in despair, for he knew not where to look for help, but my mistress, with her woman's wit, thought of a plan whereby his empty coffers might be filled and his soldiers' wants supplied. As Princess of France and Queen of England, she was the possessor of many priceless jewels, and she determined to pawn these, so as to raise money to defend the Crown.

To do this in England was impossible, but to do it abroad, especially in the Low Countries, was easy. So, since the little Princess Mary was betrothed to the young Prince of Orange, her Majesty determined to escort her little girl to her new home herself, and to carry her jewels with her. This she did; the bankers at Rotterdam and Amsterdam were friendly towards her, and, the jewels being of great value, she raised an immense sum of money, with part of which she bought arms and provisions, while the rest she carried in notes and gold for the wages of her husband's soldiers.

Having thus safely accomplished the first part of her difficult task, she sailed for England in a good ship called the *Princess Royal*, accompanied by eleven others ships which were laden with her purchases, and escorted by a convoy of Dutch men-of-war under the command of the famous Dutch Admiral, Van Tromp.

Shall I ever forget that voyage? No sooner did we lose sight of land than a mighty storm arose, and for nine long days we were tossed hither and thither, expecting every moment to go to the bottom. Our misery was increased by the closeness of the cabins, and by the screams and lamentations of her Majesty's ladies, who were terrified out of their wits.

It behoves me not to boast, but it has always been a great satisfaction to me to think that, frightened as I was, I managed to hold my tongue, and even to be of some slight service to my fellow-travellers.

The only person who had any heart left in her was the Queen herself: never for a moment did her spirits fail. Once when a bigger wave than usual dashed over the gallant vessel, making it shiver from bow to stern, and making her ladies shriek and wail as though their last hour had come, she raised herself from her pillow, and shaking her dark hair from her face, she cried out cheerily, 'Comfort yourselves, mes chères, Queens of England are never drowned.'

And by my troth, it was true, a Queen of England never had been drowned, and the ladies, pondering this, took heart and courage again, and so we had a little peace.

At last our ship reached land; not the land we were going to, but the land which we had left, for the wild waves had beaten us back to the coast of Holland again; but that mattered little, so long as our lives were safe.

For two days we rested, then we set out once more, and this time fortune favoured us, and in four days we came safely to anchor in Bridlington Bay, on the coast of Yorkshire.

A little village lay by the shore, but we hardly knew what spirit the people were of, or how many Roundhead troops might be hanging about, so we stayed on board, until, on the second day after our arrival, a body of Cavaliers were seen in the distance, then we knew that we were among friends, and we proceeded to disembark.

We woman-folk, along with our Royal mistress, were lodged in the largest house in the village, a poor place at best in which to lodge a Queen who was accustomed to Whitehall Palace or Hampton Court.

The sailors made haste to unload the boats, piling the great boxes on the little quay, while Van Tromp and his ships kept guard.

All went well that first afternoon, and when night fell we went to bed with quiet hearts, after giving thanks to the Almighty for His care over us. Alas, our troubles were but half over!

In the early morning we were rudely awakened by the crash of cannon and the noise of falling masonry. We started to our feet in alarm. But 'twas only the guns from four gunboats belonging to the King's enemies, the commander of which had heard of the Queen's arrival, and because, forsooth, the rebels were wicked enough to call it treason for her to bring arms and money to her distressed husband, he had sailed into the bay, slipping in before the Dutch Admiral's ships, which were too big to approach very near the shore, and opened fire on the very house in which her Majesty was sleeping, hoping to take her life.

During the storm the Queen's ladies had screamed and fainted, but now was no time for such weakness. One cannon-ball had already crashed through the roof of the house, carrying a chimney with it, and another had knocked down part of the outside wall and gone right down the staircase, taking with it a mass of stones and mortar.

With trembling fingers we put on what raiment we could find in the darkness—for we dared not light a candle lest it should serve as a target for our enemies—and rushed out of doors.

There the full extent of our danger flashed upon us. Day was beginning to dawn, and in the dim light we saw that two houses in the little street had been completely battered down, although, happily, their inmates had escaped.

'We must find other shelter,' said the Queen calmly, 'for, if a ball chance to drop where we stand, we shall all be blown to pieces. Here, sirrah,' she went on, addressing a man who stood near, apparently half-dazed with fright, 'canst tell us of any hillock near by, or bank of earth, behind which we can take shelter? They can knock down stone walls, but 'tis harder to shoot through solid earth.'

'There is a ditch, my lady, over there to the left,' stammered the man; ''tis four feet deep, but 'tis full of mud, and overrun with weeds and brambles.'

'Better to be choked with mud, and torn by brambles, than pounded to pieces by cannon-balls,' said the Queen, lightly. 'Come, my man, lead the way to the ditch, for, in good sooth, there is no time to lose.'

Just then a feeble yelp was heard, issuing from the house we had just quitted. 'Twas her Majesty's old lap-dog, of which she was wondrous fond, and which had been forgotten in our flight.

'Mitte, my sweet Mitte, did I then forget thee!' cried the Queen, and without waiting for our remonstrances she turned back, and re-entered the half-wrecked house, while we stood waiting, cowering down as ball after ball flew over our heads, half wondering at her Majesty's bravery, half impatient that our flight should be delayed for the sake of an ugly old lap-dog.

In two moments the Queen was back among us again, her face glowing with triumph, the ugly old beast sniffing and puffing under her arm.

'Come, friends,' she cried, 'let us forget our years and dignity and run for the ditch.'

And run we did, helter-skelter, across five hundred yards of open common, and you will realise the danger we were in when I tell you that ere we reached its shelter, and flung ourselves down hot and breathless among the tangled undergrowth that covered its slimy bottom, one poor wench was struck by a ball, and left lifeless on the green turf.

There we crouched for the next four hours, soaked to the skin and shivering with cold; safe enough withal, though ofttimes the balls struck the bank over our heads, and we were covered with the mud and turf that were thrown up as they fell.

At last, God be praised, the firing ceased. The tide had turned and crept away, and Commodore Batten and his ships had to creep away too, in case they were left stranded on Bridlington shore, and when they passed out into deep water, I warrant they suffered in their turn, for Admiral Van Tromp turned his guns on them, and chased them until they were out of sight.

Then, when the coast was clear, we went back to the village, and I trow we forgot our discomfort, and the dangers we had passed through, as we watched the rest of the stores being unpacked, and thought how their arrival would strengthen the hands of his Majesty the King.

"There we crouched for the next four hours."

"Wandering hither and thither, calling for her child."

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 19.)

CHAPTER III.

CLOTHILDE had described perfectly accurately the meeting with Peter, the huntsman, but, being ignorant of what had gone before that meeting, she could only, of course, repeat to the Countess what Peter had said. She did not know what had really happened, which was as follows:—

An hour before his meeting with the nurses in the forest, the huntsman had been wandering through the woods when he suddenly came upon the undoubted evidence of wolves or a wolf having passed through the forest. While attempting vainly to follow the track, he suddenly heard a child calling and crying.

'A lost child!' thought Peter; and he went in the direction whence the noise came. Peter knew the little Counts very well, and they him, for he was a favoured servant in the household, and frequently played with the children. He was now surprised, and not displeased, to discover that the lost child was little Mark. Peter, like every Russian peasant, had his eyes very wide open for the chance of rewards, and he realised that, by careful management, this fortunate accident of finding the child might be worth a good deal of money to him. I am afraid that Peter was not very honest, and that there are a good many Russian peasants who are like him in this respect. He did not mean actually to deceive his kind employers, but only to make the most of an opportunity. Peter took the child and spoke soothingly to him, and offered to carry him back to 'Nanna.' He picked him up and placed him on his shoulder, and started towards his own home in the village, intending to convey him thence to the Manor House. But as he went he heard the nurses shouting for the child, and, being unwilling to deliver him up tamely to these foolish protectors who had lost him, and therefore did not deserve to be considered, he began to 'think inwards,' with the result that he changed his mind and also the direction in which he went.

Instead of going home to the village, Peter turned his steps towards a woodman's little hut in the forest, a little hut which he used at certain seasons of the year when his presence was much needed in the forest, and he had not much time to waste in going to and from the village. He hastily placed little Mark within the shelter and locked him in.

'Wait here a little while,' he said, 'and Peter will fetch you.'

Then he went slowly back towards the place where the distracted nurses were still wandering and shouting, looking for the lost child. On the way to meet them it occurred to him how fortunate for him it was that he had seen the wolf-tracks, for he knew that if the nurses went home and told their mistress this story, and he were afterwards to make a dramatic arrival at the Manor House carrying little Mark, saved from imaginary wolves, a very large reward would be a practical certainty. He did not think of the anguish of mind which the poor Countess must suffer meanwhile; neither did he think of the terrible disgrace which must fall upon the nurses; or, if he did think of it, he concluded that they deserved all that could happen to them—which was, perhaps, the case. It did occur to him that it might appear somewhat remarkable that little Count Mark should have been twice snapped up by a wolf during his short life of four years; but the Count was not at home, and perhaps no one else would be inclined to feel suspicious. Therefore, when he met the women he pulled a long face, and told them the story of the wolf-tracks. He exaggerated his tale, looked grim, and sent them weeping and wailing homewards, having succeeded in persuading them that little Mark's chances of escape were very small, even though so great a hunter as himself were upon the war-path.

When Peter left the women in order to go and fetch Mark, and, after a proper interval, bring him back to his mother's arms, he returned slowly towards the hut. There was no hurry. On the contrary, every moment of delay would add to the service rendered his mistress, for she would grow increasingly anxious and more and more ready to reward any man who brought her darling back to her. So he sat and smoked in comfort for an hour or two, and only returned at dusk to the woodman's hut in which he had left little Count Mark.

As he neared the hut, however, Peter suddenly saw something which sent his heart into his mouth. The door seemed to be ajar.

'Dear Heaven!' muttered the huntsman, 'what has happened?'

He rushed forward, pulled the door open, and entered the hut. To his horror and amazement, the child was not there. The door had been forced. This could easily enough be effected by any one determined to enter the hut; but why should any one wish to do so? Peter did not even contemplate the possibility of the child having broken his own way out.

Who, then, could have opened the barred door and released the boy? Scarcely one person passed the hut in a month. Peter stood with beating heart, and pondered deeply.

The hut was built in a thickly wooded spot some hundred yards from a public road, not much frequented, which traversed the forest at this point. It occurred to Peter that some one had heard the child crying, and had come and rescued him.

'Yes,' he muttered, half aloud. 'So it must have been—but who?'

This, if it had really happened, was a blow to Peter, for it meant that some other person would earn—or, at least, share—the reward which should have been his. He sat down, in a very bad humour, to reflect. Whoever had found the child would undoubtedly recognise it by its clothes, and would take it straight to the Manor House. It was a severe disappointment for him.

However, there was nothing to be done. He must return to the Countess, and inform her that his efforts to find the little Count had hitherto failed. It was now dark, or nearly so. If Mark had not already been brought back, he would assure the Countess that he would set out upon a renewed search at the earliest blush of dawn. There might still be a reward in this business, but it was now very uncertain.

So Peter returned and reported at the Manor House. Nothing had been heard of little Mark. The poor Countess had waited in an agony of suspense for Peter's return. When he came, and without Mark, her face paled to the colour of paper. She sank back into a chair, and for a few moments said nothing.

Suddenly she recovered herself.

'At any rate, no one knows for sure that the child was seized and slain by wolves,' she said. 'How dared those women tell me that the child is dead? Send men out, huntsman! Let every one in the village that possesses arms take a lantern and his gun, or his scythe or sickle, and search the forest from end to end. Maybe, by the mercy of God, I shall yet find my little Mark. Stay! I will go myself with the rest. Come, Fraulein, are you afraid? Give me the Count's gun; it hangs over the chimney-piece in his cabinet. Get ready, Fraulein, and come; tell the nurses to come also—the whole household shall assist.'

The distracted Countess was actually preparing to depart into the woods armed with a gun, as to the use of which she was entirely ignorant; but she burst into tears before the preparations were completed, and she was eventually induced to go to bed by the assurance that the forest should be scoured at once by the entire population of the village.

That was a long night in the forest. The tall old pine-trees had assuredly never witnessed so strange a sight through all the years in which they had waved their heads to the winds of winter, and bent them gracefully to the sweet summer breezes; for the population of three villages—the three which stood upon Count Stirinof's estate—invaded it this night with lanterns and ransacked it from end to end, trampling the poor lilies of the valley and crushing the strawberries—frightened out of their wits, most of them, lest the dreaded wolves should pounce out upon them from some thicket.

Nothing was found. No shred of little Mark's clothing to indicate that the savage brutes had dragged the child through the cover, tearing his garments from his tender little limbs in the process; no track of little feet in the damp places—absolutely nothing. By the early morning the villagers had separated to their homes, having reached the sad conclusion that poor little Count Mark had indeed been carried away, clothes and all, and by this time was probably eaten up.

The unfortunate Countess had actually taken part in the search, rising from her bed to join the rest in the forest, and spending half the night in wandering distracted hither and thither, calling for her child; it was a piteous sight for those who saw it, and was not soon forgotten by them.

(*Continued on page* 38.)

'THE COLD SHOULDER.'

THIS phrase has its origin in a curious old French custom. It was once the custom in France to serve a guest who had outstayed his welcome with a cold shoulder of mutton instead of a hot roast one. This was intended as a gentle hint for him to go.

THE DUKE'S PROTÉGÉ.

WILLIAM, Duke of Cumberland, the second son of George the Second, was the first of the Hanoverian princes born in England, and partly upon that account and partly because of his own affability, he became very popular with the people.

It is related of him that when he was directing our military operations in Germany, he was so pleased with the work of one of the sergeants in his regiment that, after making inquiries into his character, he gave him a lieutenancy. Some time afterwards this officer begged him to take back his commission and return him to the ranks. Upon inquiry the Duke found that the lieutenant's only reason for this request was that his fellow-officers held aloof from him, regarding themselves as superior by birth and education. They looked upon his promotion, in fact, as in some measure an insult to themselves. Being separated by his rank from his old associates, the young lieutenant found himself isolated from every friend, and felt his position very irksome.

On the morning after he had discovered this officer's painful situation, the Duke went upon parade. He was welcomed by a number of distinguished officers, but, looking round, he beheld the young lieutenant walking alone.

'Why is not this officer admitted to your society?' he asked. Without waiting for an answer he stepped forward, took the lieutenant's arm, and walked with him along the lines, followed by the rest of the officers, who began to feel a little ashamed of themselves. At the close of the parade the Duke was invited to the mess, but he would not accept the invitation unless he might be accompanied by his young friend. Such a request, coming from the Duke, was not to be denied. The lieutenant was received into the company of his fellow-officers, and henceforth all were eager to enjoy his friendship.

I'LL TRY.

OH! I wish I could speak to the birds and the flowers,
I wish I could speak to the trees;
And I wish I could laugh with the gurgling brown brook;
I wish I could sigh with the breeze.

Oh! I wish I could shout with the wild, tearing winds;
I wish I could cry with the rain;
Oh! I wish I could grow with the great mountains high,
And dream with the lakes in the plain.

How I wish I could ride up sky-high with the moon,
And fly fast with the bright shooting stars;
Oh! I wish I could ride in the sun's golden coach,
And play with its clear dancing bars.

Oh! I wish I could run up the white Milky Way,
And could talk with the Man in the Moon;
And I wish I could ask why he still stays up there,
And will he be coming down soon?

"This is the bird's opportunity."

And I wish he would bring down his dog and his sticks,
And some wee, twinkly stars in a sack;
And then when it was night and he'd got to go home,
I'd go, too, for I'd climb on his back!

But my dear father says, if I just sit and wish,
That I'll never grow into a man;
I must work, I must learn to be brave, good, and true:
Well, I'll try to, as hard as I can.

THE HOODED CROW OF CEYLON.

THE hooded crow of Ceylon, unlike many crows, is not a bird that haunts lonely places; it delights in society, and makes nests about towns that are full of people. Handsome trees grow in the towns, frequently, and from the windows of the houses it is easy to see into the crows' nests, placed amongst the trees. The hooded crows are always on the watch; they are not at all timid, and have a quiet way of swooping down which is rather startling. People often sit in the open air taking breakfast; should the table be left a minute, the crows fly to the spot and seize whatever they like of the food, leaving their footmarks upon the white tablecloth, or perhaps on pats of butter. Then again, in the market-place there often sits a woman, who fries cakes to sell to the public in her little hut. An artful crow knows well what she is doing, and waits for his chance. She has made her cakes and laid them upon a small round basket ready for a customer, but steps back a minute to get her areca-nut to chew. This is the bird's opportunity; he takes a couple of cakes, it may be, and hops off. The woman is tempted to follow him, thinking she may save one, but it is an unwise act; other birds are lurking near, and in her absence down they come, take cakes, dried fish, and anything else, and possibly smash some of her crockery before she can get back to guard her stall.

Yet the hooded crow is by no means a useless bird: it clears from the streets many things which might prove unwholesome. Though not in the least afraid of the natives, a hooded crow dreads the white man and his gun; even a stick pointed to the sky will send one away at full speed.

SOME OF NATURE'S MARVELS.

I.—RADIOLARIA.

WE have a habit, many of us, of thinking that only great deeds count—that the world is ruled by the great people whose names the history books and newspapers keep constantly before us; while, on the other hand, we take it for granted that the people who lead humdrum lives, who pass through

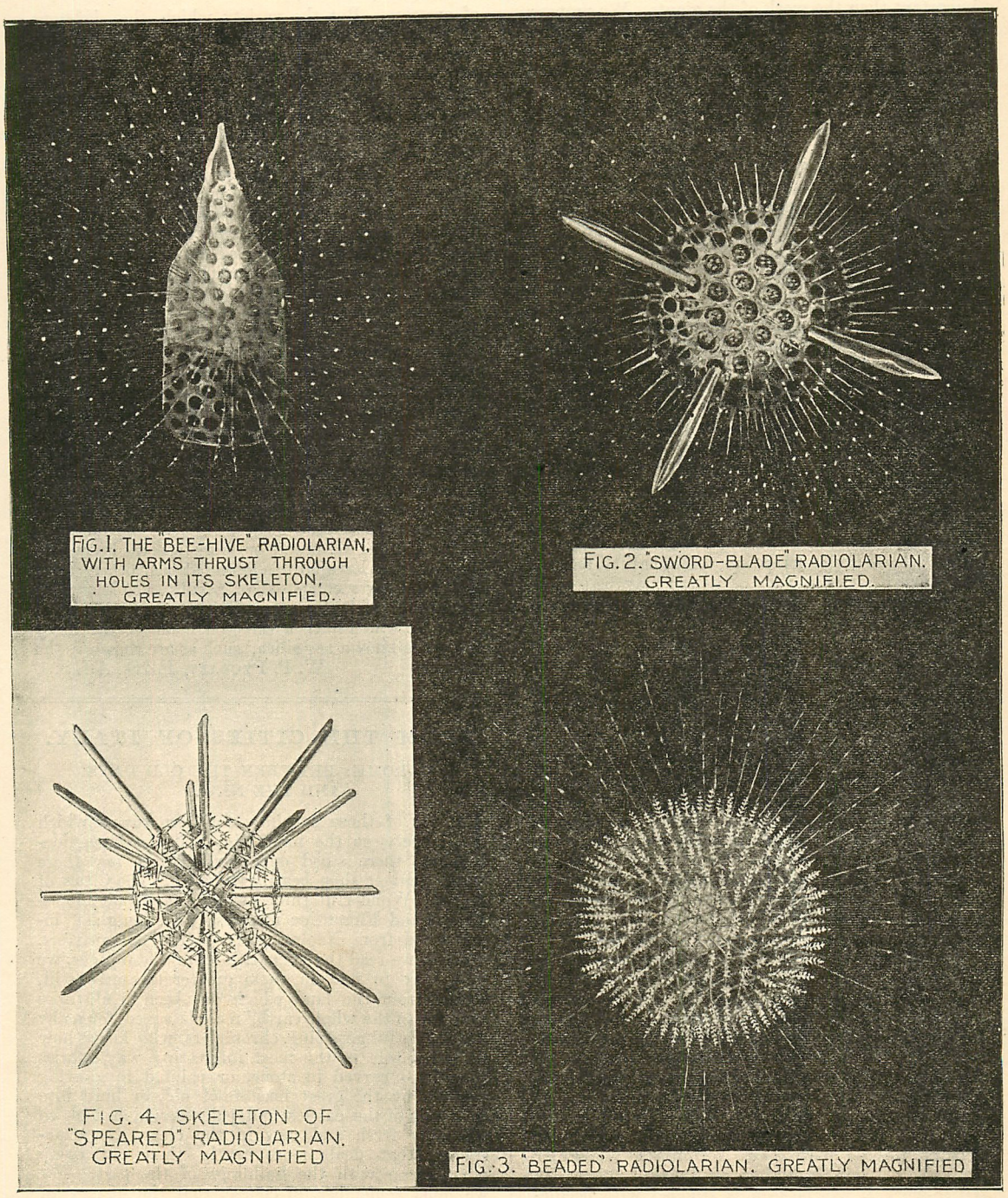


FIG. 1. THE "BEE-HIVE" RADIOLARIAN, WITH ARMS THRUST THROUGH HOLES IN ITS SKELETON, GREATLY MAGNIFIED.

FIG. 2. "SWORD-BLADE" RADIOLARIAN. GREATLY MAGNIFIED.

FIG. 4. SKELETON OF "SPEARED" RADIOLARIAN. GREATLY MAGNIFIED

FIG. 3. "BEADED" RADIOLARIAN. GREATLY MAGNIFIED

the world almost unnoticed, are people of no importance whatsoever. In this we are wrong. Among those who have lived obscure and humble lives, many have, in their day, performed great deeds, which time may or may not reveal. And so it is in the world of the lower creatures: indeed, the part played by them in the making of the world which they and we live in, is, and has been, vastly more

important than the work of the giants. We propose, as it were, to lift the veil which hides their humble place in the scheme of nature, and show, in these articles, how much we owe to these lowly and unknown ones. Their very existence is never suspected by most of us: to find them we should have to seek, very often, among what we commonly regard as the world's dirt, and even then we should have to employ the aid of a microscope. But having found them out, contempt is turned into wonder, partly at their minute size, and partly at their exquisite beauty.

In this first chapter let us take some of the lowliest of living creatures among the animal kingdom, creatures which are known only to those who make a study of such living bodies as are practically invisible, except through the microscope. Known as 'Radiolaria,' and so small as to be almost invisible to the naked eye, these creatures are among the most marvellously beautiful of all living things. They live in the warmer waters of the ocean, at or near the surface, though some inhabit the deeper waters. During life many species are beautifully coloured—crimson, blue, and yellow—well meriting the description 'Gems of the Ocean' which has been given them. But this description is more especially true of those which have a hard skeleton; for unlike those of what we call the 'higher' animals, these skeletons are marvels of beauty, looking like fairy designs in spun glass, as may be seen in the accompanying illustrations. Take for instance the 'bee-hive' radiolarian (fig. 1). Here, it will be noticed, this skeleton is roughly like a bee-hive in shape, but pierced with a filigree-work of small holes. Through these holes, you will note, long thread-like arms of a soft jelly, representing the 'flesh' of the living animal, are thrust, serving at once as swimming organs, or rather as floats, and to capture food. Within the 'hive,' in the living animal, there may often be seen a pink central portion, and resting thereon a number of little yellow balls, which are lowly plants that have managed to induce these tiny animals to carry them about, in return for certain services which they are able to render. Thus the tiny plants supply their kindly hosts with the life-giving oxygen, as well as certain food materials, while the host dispenses the element of food necessary to the support of plant-life.

Again, turn to fig. 2, and note the extraordinary beauty and no less extraordinary symmetry of the perforated globe, pierced by broad, sword-like blades in regular order around the whole. During life this perforated skeleton encloses a central body, red in colour, which sends out, through the holes in the spherical shell, countless thread-like streamers which are in constant motion.

The creature shown in fig. 3 is, if possible, still more beautiful. Here we have again a globular skeleton pierced with holes, forming a triangular lattice-work, and enclosing an inner body. The lattice-work, it will be seen, is studded with needle-like rods, each of which is ornamented with little bead-like swellings. Fig. 4 represents another of these marvels of nature: here the skeleton is formed of twenty glass-like rods, each of which appears as though it had been thrust through a little network of crosses. But the variety which the skeletons of these minute creatures display is endless: as may be judged from the fact that we have taken only four examples from a possible four thousand, this number representing the different species which have been described in scientific works!

In the Mediterranean, and especially in the Indian and Pacific Oceans, these little bodies float at the surface in countless myriads; and as they die these surpassingly beautiful skeletons fall till they reach the bottom, where they form—*mud!* Just think of it, thousands of square miles of the ocean floor, several feet thick, formed of these skeletons, which are so small as to appear, when seen in a mass, as nothing more beautiful than mud!

In times past, countless years ago, this same drama of the life and death of these little creatures 'of no account' was being enacted. And the mud of those days is now the 'rock' of to-day! Much of the earth which is now dry land is made up entirely of these skeletons; thus the beautiful and highly prized stone known as 'jasper' is made up almost entirely of these skeletons, and so too are the rocks known as 'chert,' and 'hornstone.' In the British Museum of Natural History there may be seen a huge mass of chalky-looking rock which is similarly made up of these dead bodies.

Of the four thousand or more species known to science, some have no 'skeleton' at all, others have their hard parts composed of a substance known as 'acanthin,' and this soon decays; only those are preserved which have a skeleton made of the flinty substance known as 'silica,' such as are shown in the figures.

W. P. Pycraft, F.Z.S., A.L.S.

FROM THE CITIES OF ITALY.

I.—ROME: BETWEEN THE OLD DAYS AND THE NEW.

In one of those sunshiny southern towns which lie between the mountains and the blue, tideless sea, there stood once—and I dare say there stands still—a shop bearing the sign, 'The Cities of Italy.' Wonderful things came out of that shop—Roman and Florentine mosaics, Venetian glass, inlaid wood from Naples, pottery from all quarters. And, as we read the same title over these pages, we may look to find in them greater treasures still, stories from the land which has been in all times 'the joy of the whole earth,' records saved for us by the delightful gossiping chroniclers, who knew how to tell a tale in the most interesting way, stories sometimes carved in stone, or painted in glowing colours, by the great masters of old, or built into the walls of the castles and palaces, which look so strangely fresh and new in the clear, dry atmosphere, that deals more gently than our damp northern air with the buildings of the past. For we must remember, of course, that the history of Italy is not one history, but many, since the cities stood each proudly alone, with their different forms of government, their fierce feuds and quarrels, their wars and alliances, their internal struggles and revolutions.

Chief of them all, throned upon her seven hills, stands Immortal Rome, with a history of nearly three thousand years behind her. Plenty of choice we shall find in such a record as this, such a wealth of fascinating stories that we feel almost bewildered. What shall we talk about to-day, as we watch the sunset from the Pincian Hill, or stroll along the Appian Way, where the 'Star of Bethlehem' and the blue borage grow among the ruins of old tombs? Shall we go back to the dim ages where the stories are hardly history, when the undying fire burnt in the House of the Vestals:

'When Romans in Rome's quarrel
Spared neither land nor gold,
Nor son, nor wife, nor limb, nor life,
In the brave days of old?'

Or shall we think of the Imperial days, when the stately palaces were reared upon the Palatine Hill, and when the light of truth began to burn in the place of the old Vestal fire?

Or shall we come to later days still, when proud Roman nobles stripped the marble from those same Imperial palaces to deck their own new dwellings?

Suppose we take to-day a picture of the time between the old days and the new, of the early years of the fifth century, when Rome was Christian in name, but clung yet to many of the fierce old Pagan customs—which died so hard and so slowly.

Very evil days had come upon the Eternal City. The glory was departed from Rome in the saddest of all ways, because the strength and the manliness had gone from her people. Foreign mercenaries fought her battles, while Honorius, the Western Emperor, amused himself with his tame poultry, and the people were kept in good humour by constant promises of 'panem et circenses'—bread and sports. The Goths, under their terrible chief, Alaric, were pouring into Italy, but the childish young Emperor cared nothing for the fate of Rome while his hens would feed from his hand, and the defence of the Empire was left to his general, Stilicho, the last of the great Roman leaders. The Goths were defeated and checked near Verona, and the citizens of Rome, though their days of true military glory were over, were quite ready to celebrate the victory by extravagant festivities. The Emperor and the General were honoured with a magnificent triumph, a procession through the streets, and a great display in the Coliseum. The mighty amphitheatre, which the captive Jews had built for Titus, is familiar to us all, at any rate, by picture, and no one who has stood in the midst of the great circle of solid masonry, canopied only by the blue Italian sky, or has climbed up by the worn steps to the higher seats, and tried to picture the eighty-seven thousand faces lining the galleries and gazing down into the arena, will ever forget the solemn grandeur of the vast ruin. The days when Christian men and maidens were exposed there to savage beasts, with noble ladies and gentle Vestals looking on, were over in the reign of Honorius, and the display on this occasion took the form of races, dancing, and hunting of wild animals. But the combats of gladiators were still dear to the Roman citizens, and, on this great occasion, a fight to the death with sharp spears and swords was to be the chief feature of the entertainment.

The gladiators entered the arena, greeted with shouts of delight from the packed galleries. They passed before the seat of the half-imbecile lad who wore the Imperial purple, greeting him with the pathetic words: 'Hail, Cæsar! We who are about to die salute thee.'

Tier above tier, Roman senators, luxurious nobles, and dainty ladies, with the common people higher yet, or wedged in closely between the rows, gazed down in eager expectation upon the great circle of white sand, soon to be crimsoned with the blood of brave men. Suddenly, before the combatants closed, a single voice arose crying shame upon the spectacle. All eyes were turned in one direction as a man, rough and unkempt, and wearing the coarse dress of one of the desert hermits, sprang into the arena. All alone, in the midst of the great concourse, he lifted up his voice in stern denunciation of such sport as this in a Christian city. Was this a fit way, he asked, to celebrate the victory granted to the Roman arms? Would they strengthen themselves against the barbarians by thus shedding blood in sport as a sight for a holiday?

For a moment the vast crowd were silent in sheer amazement. Then there arose a roar of anger at the interference with the sport. With one voice the spectators shouted that the combat should begin. Let the meddler stand back or take the consequences. But the hermit was as fearless as the martyrs of earlier days. He stood still in the midst of the huge amphitheatre, his arms outstretched to part the combatants, his voice uplifted in protest against the old savage custom of Pagan Rome. Then the rage of the spectators found a fiercer expression. Stones came flying through the air. The protesting voice was drowned by shouts of 'Out upon him! Down with him!' Missiles of all sorts were hurled from the benches, and the hermit fell, still striving to hold the combatants apart. The frantic people cared not what they threw in their disappointed rage; a few moments more and the brave voice was silenced, the man who had dared to speak against an evil custom lay lifeless on the blood-stained sand—one more martyr in the cause of love and compassion.

And then the crowd, who had been untouched by his words, were awed into repentance by his brave death. Rage passed into remorse as they saw what they had done. Those who had been foremost in denouncing him felt shame at the thought of the one man done to death by the thousands whom he had faced so fearlessly. The question, 'Who was he?' passed from lip to lip, and the marred and blood-stained face was recognised by some as that of Telemachus, a hermit from far-away Syria, who had come to Rome, some said, for this very purpose of protesting against the gladiatorial combats, even at the risk of his life.

And the protest was not in vain. From that day forward no gladiator fought again in the Roman displays. The conscience of the people seemed to have awakened at last to the sinfulness of the waste of life, and the wanton destruction of brave men, and the religion of love killed little by little the taste for such scenes of bloodshed and horror.

"The hermit was fearless."

"'Now, then, be off!'"

THE HERMIT'S DEN.

'I CAN'T go a step further, Unwin; I can't indeed! My knee shoots as if a red-hot needle were going through it each time I move. You must leave me, and make the best of your way home and get help. I shall be all right alone for a few hours.'

'Don't talk bosh!' replied Unwin, briskly. 'I am not going to leave you, so you need not think it'—and, as he spoke, he put his arm still closer round his friend.

'That's better!' he said. 'Now put your arm round my neck, and that will help you to get along. If only we were out of this wood, there would be sure to be some one passing along the lanes who would give us a lift home. . . . Hallo! I see some smoke over there! Where there is smoke, there is fire; and where there is fire, there must be man—for don't all the books tell us that man is the only fire-making animal? Come, let us make an effort, and we shall reach a friend in no time.'

Unwin had spoken gaily to try and keep up the other boy's spirits, but he was terribly afraid all the time of his friend fainting away before he could find any one to help them; and, in truth, Ruster's pain was so intense that it was all he could do to hobble the short distance that lay between them and the welcome smoke.

However, English boys are seldom lacking in pluck, and at last they reached the clearing, where they could see a bright little fire, and on it a large kettle without a lid, and a tin canister—presumably of tea—standing on the turf close by. A rude wooden bar stretched across the fire, and near a tree close by was a large opening in the hillside, like the mouth of a cave.

'Now,' said Unwin, as he helped the half-fainting boy to a seat on the sloping bank, 'you rest here; the owner of this beautiful kettle is sure to return when he thinks the water boils, and we shall all have a cosy tea together. Some one or other will fetch a carriage for us, and we shall be home and your knee bound up before we can say "Jack Robinson."'

Hardly were these cheery words out of Unwin's mouth when a rough, hairy-looking man climbed out of the cave just below the root of the old tree near which they were standing, and called out in a menacing voice: 'Now, then, be off! This is my place, and I want no one here. Be off, I say! I'll have no one prying round my house'—and he brandished a rugged staff which he held in his hand as he glared at the two boys.

'Don't excite yourself, Daddy,' said Unwin, calmly; 'we don't want to pry, I promise you. We have been bird-nesting, and this fellow has had a nasty tumble and hurt his knee, and, knowing what a clever chap you are, we thought we would just ask you to help us.'

The old man stopped in the midst of his meditated attack on the invaders of his solitude, and stood for a minute looking fixedly at the boys; then, seeing the truth of Unwin's words, and that the other boy was really in pain, he threw down his staff, the glare went out of his eyes, and he went gently towards them.

'It's my leg!' said Ruster, trying to smile, but only succeeding in making a twist of his face, 'it does hurt!'

'Umph!' was the old man's reply, for he was puzzled and wanted time to think the matter over.

It was now two years or more since he had vowed to live alone, and neither speak to any one nor admit any one into the cave he had made for himself in the heart of the forest. A disastrous lawsuit had deprived him of nearly all his money, and perhaps unhinged his mind a little. Hitherto he had kept his vow, and had lived his own life, uncheered by any human being. It had suited the morose temper of the man, who felt that all the world was against him. But now these boys had come, and had thrown themselves fearlessly on his hospitality! What should he do? Could he drive that injured lad from his door, unaided? No, his mind was made up, and at last he spoke.

'You can come in here and rest awhile on my bed if you like,' he said gruffly, for the sound of his own voice sounded strange to him. 'I believe cold-water bandages would relieve the pain in your knee.'

'That's the very thing, Daddy! I knew you would help us!' said Unwin, as he guided Ruster down the steep descent to the old man's strange dwelling, where they found a tidy bed, raised from the ground by boards, and a table and chair, all scrupulously neat and clean.

'You are very snug here, Daddy!' said Unwin, looking round him.

'It's my home,' said the old man simply, as he busied himself in applying a cold-water bandage to the injured knee.

'Is it?' continued the boy, who would never be long silent, 'and a very jolly sort of home too! I wouldn't mind changing. I live at Danbury, at the big white house; my father is Mr. Unwin, the lawyer—most people about here know him.'

'Well, I don't!' said the old man shortly, for the mention of a lawyer brought back old wrongs. 'I have nothing to do with lawyers! It was one of them brought me to ruin.'

'That's bad,' said Unwin, 'but sometimes lawyers bring riches instead of ruin. Father's advertising now all over the world for a chap of the name of Joshua Langsale: there is a big place and a fortune waiting for him, only he won't turn up, silly fellow!'

'What name did you say?' said the man, turning sharply round on the boy. 'Joshua Langsale was it?'

'Yes,' said Unwin; 'do you know him? You might tip him a line, and tell him to claim it,' went on the boy in his careless, irresponsible way.

'It's my name,' said the old man, firmly, as he again dipped the bandage in water, and applied it to Ruster's knee, 'but no money that has to pass through a lawyer's hands will ever come to me. I know better! Sharks all! Once bit, twice shy!'

'Oh, I say, Daddy!' here interrupted Unwin, 'you must not lump them all as a bad lot. My father is as honest as you are, and you have only to prove to him that you are really Joshua Langsale and you will get the money, and Ruster and I will come and help you spend it.'

'I dare say, when I get it!' said the old man.

After some time Ruster declared he felt able to limp to the cross-roads, where a passing cart would

be sure to give them a lift home, and, with many thanks to the queer old man, the boys left, Unwin announcing:

'I shall come again; you haven't seen the last of me. I am going to get that estate for you. One good turn deserves another, you know.'

Unwin kept his word, and paid more than one visit to the old recluse, and chiefly by the boy's influence the old man was at last prevailed upon to prove his identity with the lost Joshua Langsale. Prosperity soon softened and improved him, and he no longer shuns his fellows, but is a good landlord and hospitable friend. But of all the visitors at Langsale Hall, none is more welcome than the cheery young fellow, Unwin.

PUZZLERS FOR WISE HEADS.

2.—Geographical Puzzle.

An *r*, and an *n*, and *w*, *u*, *a*,
You mix with four *t*'s in the right sort of way;
Three *s*'s, two *o*'s, and two *h*'s and *e*'s,
The answer encompasses all lands and seas.

W. S.

[*Answer on page* 75.]

Answer to Puzzle on page 7.

1.—*Philistine.*

1. Pile.	3. Stile.	5. Sin.	7. Pine.	9. Pin.
2. List.	4. Pen.	6. Nest.	8. Nile.	10. Hip.

KILLED BY CURIOSITY.

THERE is an African insect, the larvæ of which prey upon ants. The larva puts its head into a small hole in the ground, and quivers its tail quickly. The ants come near to examine the novel object, and, goaded by curiosity, go too closely, when suddenly they are seized by the forceps or graspers with which the tail is furnished, and thus are killed. Not only do insects and the lower animals understand that the curiosity of their victims may be employed as a snare for them, but human beings understand and act upon the same principle. Many young men and young women have been ruined by adopting the apparently harmless course of 'going to see what it was like.'

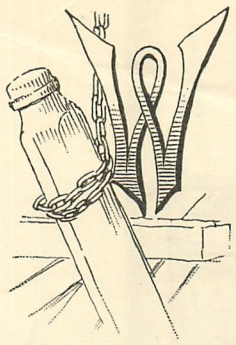
HEPHZIBAH MERTON'S APPLE-PIES.

FEW persons, when they use the phrase, 'in apple-pie order,' ever think of Hephzibah Merton. She was a housewife of Puritan times. Every Saturday the good woman baked two or three dozen apple-pies, which were to last her family through the week. These she placed in her pantry, labelling one or more for each day. The pantry thus arranged was said to be 'in apple-pie order.'

With all due respect for Mrs. Hephzibah, one is inclined to think that her family must have got very tired of apple-pies.

LITTLE GIANTS OF LABOUR.

II.—THE PILE-DRIVER.

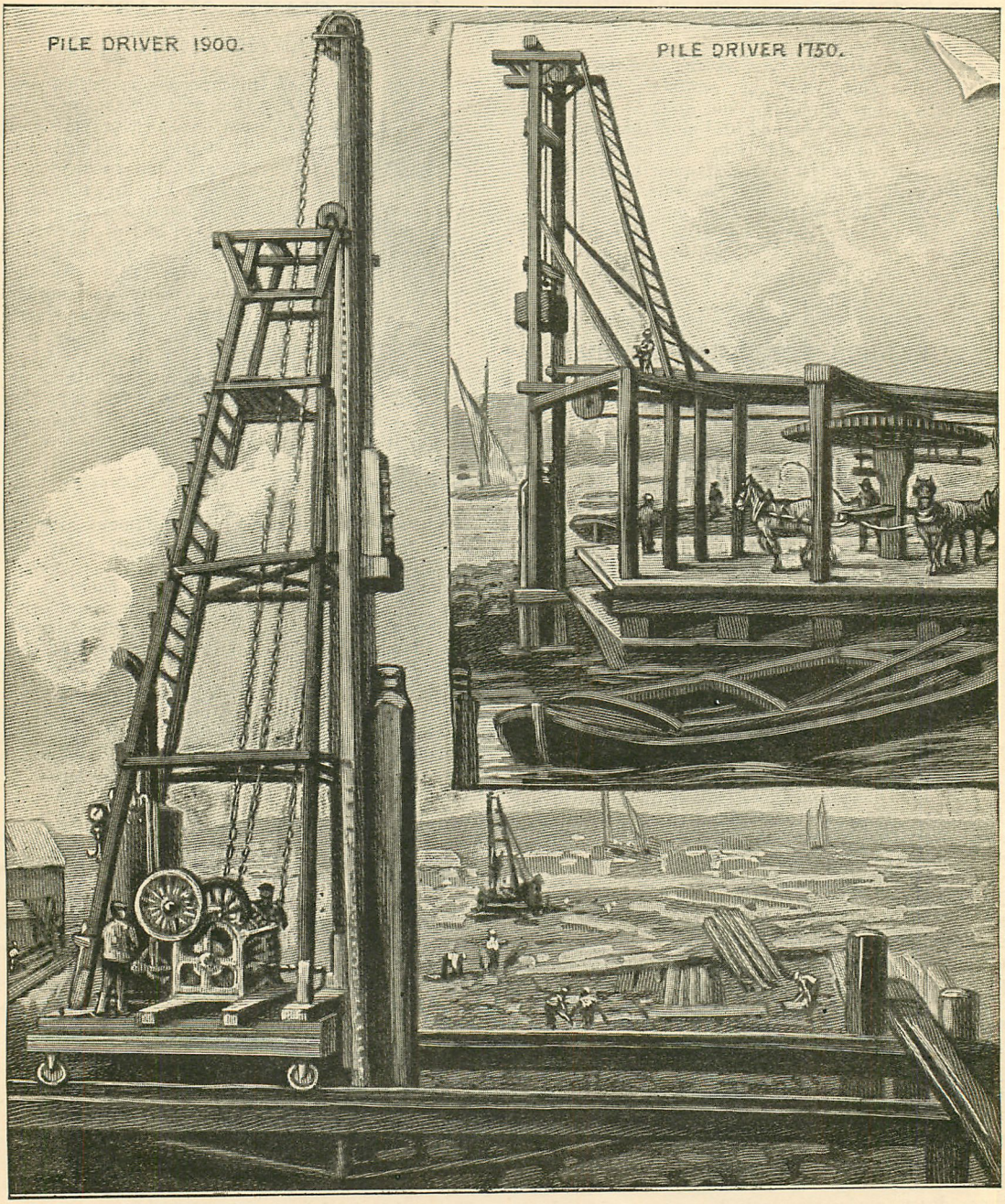


WHEN, many centuries ago, the inhabitants of the north-eastern provinces of Italy grew dissatisfied with the laws under which they were living, they retreated to the sandy region at the northern end of the Adriatic Sea. Here they found a number of flat islands, separated from one another by broad lagoons and narrow channels. It was not a very promising place for the building of a city or the establishment of a state, but it was free from the sway of tyranny, and the exiles made it their home. Little by little the sandy islands became dotted with houses, the narrow channels were spanned by bridges, and the lagoons were shaped into sheltering harbours.

Such was the beginning of the famous city of Venice, and while the *state* was built upon the foundations of freedom, the city itself was erected upon a foundation of piles. Perhaps there is no town in Europe which affords such an example of the use of piles. Of course the low, flat islands, many of which were periodically submerged by the sea, even in these almost tideless waters, would never have been sufficiently solid to bear the weight of stone buildings on their shifting surfaces. So the busy builders brought cargoes of timber from the mainland, and pointing each 'balk' or beam with their axes till it resembled a huge square lead pencil, drove it into the mud and sand until it would sink no deeper. When a number of these timbers had been driven in side by side, they formed a foundation capable of bearing a cathedral or a palace without shifting.

The pile-driver of those days was not just like ours, since the power of steam was unknown. The weight which struck the blow was attached to the end of a rope passing over a pulley at the head of three beams, which leaned towards each other at the top. When only light work is to be done, such a pile-driver is still in use, the weight or ram being used by a number of men, or sometimes by a horse and windlass. At the point where the lifting-rope reaches the pulley other lines are attached to it, according to the number of men employed. If the ram weighs three hundred and thirty-six pounds, there must be at least eight lines, for it is proved that one man cannot lift more than forty pounds under such circumstances.

The model pile-driver at South Kensington, however, is worked by steam. The ever-revolving chain carries the ram to a certain height, where it is released by a trigger, and falls with a crash on the top of the pile it is driving. In such work as this great care has to be taken not to strike too hard a blow, or to keep on after the pile has ceased to penetrate the earth, for if the 'hammer' does not



leave off when the work is done there is a danger of shattering the timber.

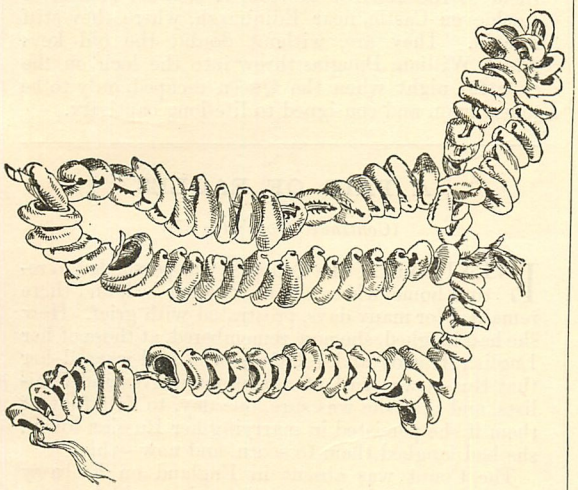
There are many cities in Europe, besides Venice, largely built upon piles. Christiania and Stockholm are two, but you can probably mention others yourself even without looking at the map.

But the pile-driver has much less work to do nowadays, because a better means has been invented for making artificial foundations. Large quantities of Portland cement are mixed and deposited in the excavations where the building is to stand, and as this hardens a solid block is formed capable of bearing a heavier building than was ever erected in Venice, or than any capital in the world can want.

STRANGE MONEY.

POETS and philosophers, both ancient and modern, unite in warning us against money—money-getting and money-hoarding. True, yet Solomon says that 'money is a defence,' which is also true, for without it we are indeed helpless. The first thing we do when we find ourselves in a foreign country, is to learn the coinage of that country. Whether it be francs, thalers, or dollars, we lose no time in getting the relative value of them into our minds. The average traveller finds this no easy matter, but if his wanderings take him beyond the reach of francs, thalers, and dollars, his difficulties increase tenfold.

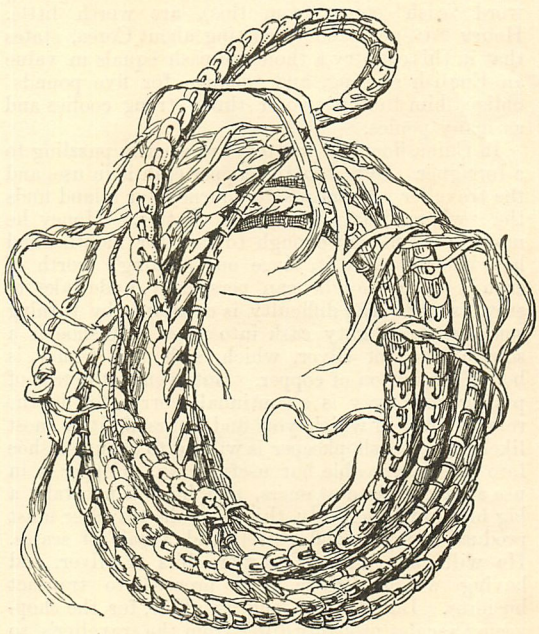
For instance, if he finds himself in Central Africa his well-filled purse will be of no use to him, whereas with a handful of cowrie shells he can pay



String of Cowrie Money.

his way comfortably. Thus one discovers that money does not necessarily mean coin. Coin is the outcome of civilisation. The earliest attempt of the savage mind in the way of commerce takes the form of barter, one article being exchanged for another; and it is a step in advance when he begins to use one article as an equivalent for any goods received. Hence cowrie shells, which are very good money all over Africa and in some other parts of the world. Cowries are usually threaded upon cords, many yards long. These are twisted into coils. A man who wishes to buy a fowl, or a basket of eggs, will cut off a portion of his shell rope and hand it over to the seller.

Rope money of a different sort is used in the South Sea Islands, where the natives carry long coils of rope cunningly wrought of Flying Fox fur or of tiny, brilliant feathers. This sort of money, if not



Shell Money of Melanesia.

convenient, is at least picturesque. But there is another kind of rope money which is neither convenient nor picturesque. In China and Corea

Bargaining with Strings of "Cash."

copper coins are used. These are rather larger than our penny, and have a hole in the middle through which a cord is passed. Each hundred is marked by a knot in the cord. These coins, or cash (our slang word 'cash' comes from this), are worth little. Henry Savage Landor, writing about Corea, states that in this country a thousand cash equals in value an English shilling, and 'change for five pounds' obliged him to hire two or three strong coolies and as many ponies.

In China financial matters are equally puzzling to a foreigner. Here, too, the copper cash is in use, and the traveller who means to journey far inland finds the 'wherewithal' a difficult matter. Money he must have, money enough to last for months, and how is he to carry it, since one shilling's worth of cash is more than he can personally undertake to stow away? The difficulty is overcome by turning some of the weighty cash into *shoes*. A shoe is a square block of silver, which, although clumsy, is better than a ton of copper. But even so the task of paying your way is a continual worry; for, in the remote town in which you find yourself, it is most likely that no shopkeeper is willing to change a shoe into the disagreeable but useful cash. Copper is in use amongst his customers, and he will not take a big block of silver. In this case the traveller must produce hammer and chisel, and a pair of scales. He will chop off one or more bits of silver, and having weighed them, will proceed to transact business. But this is a lengthy affair, for the shopkeeper's scales probably differ from the traveller's, so that much haggling ensues, and much time is wasted.

It is a far cry from Central China to Madagascar; but here also fragments of silver serve as money. Tiny money scales are carried by every one, and are in constant use, for every bit of silver or gold which passes between buyer and seller must be weighed.

In Madagascar the silver shoe of China is unknown; but any sort of silver or gold coin which comes into the country may be thus cut up. Francs, thalers, dollars, or English shillings, you will find them all in fragments no larger than grains of rice. This sort of strange money has the advantage of being light to carry; moreover, a man need never be troubled by lack of change, since he can always subdivide his bit of silver as much as he chooses.

A story comes to us from Mexico which is an amusing proof that anything may be used as money which is generally accepted as a substitute for coin. A traveller relates that he went into a shop in a small country town, and, having made his purchase, put a dollar on the counter. To his astonishment change was given to him in the form of little cakes of soap, like small biscuits, each bearing a Government stamp and the maker's name. A policeman who happened to be in the shop explained to the amazed traveller that it was all right, and that he would find his 'small change' come in very useful, which was perfectly true. It was useful in more ways than one, for he discovered to his amusement that it was quite legitimate to make use of a cake of soap in the ordinary way and pass it as money afterwards, and this without cheating, either. It was the custom of the country, and as long as the stamp was visible the soap was accepted as money.

GREAT IN LITTLE.

SMALL things hold great—the little dewdrop bright,
Touched by the sun, becomes an orb of light;
Not all the radiant glory worlds might bring,
Could make it a more perfect, lovely thing.

So in a child, small though it be and weak,
The greater powers and worth of manhood speak;
And its small victories, daily, hourly won,
Shine brighter than a hero's deeds have done.

THE STORY OF A BUNCH OF KEYS.

AFTER Mary Queen of Scots had succeeded in effecting her escape from the grim old fortress of Lochleven, her deliverer, William Douglas, threw the keys which had brought her her freedom into the waters of the lake. There they lay till the parching summer of 1805, when a boy named William Honeyman, while strolling on its banks, picked up a bunch of five keys of antique workmanship, fastened by an iron ring. These the boy carried to the parish schoolmaster, who forwarded them to the Earl of Morton, Hereditary Keeper of Lochleven Castle, near Edinburgh, where they still remain. They are, without doubt, the old keys which William Douglas threw into the loch on the eventful night when the Queen escaped, only to be taken again and consigned to life-long captivity.

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 27.)

EVENTUALLY the Countess was persuaded to return home, where she took to her bed, and there remained for many days, prostrated with grief. How she had laughed, she now remembered, at those of her English friends and relatives who had warned her that Russia was full of dangerous wolves and Nihilists, and that she was sure, one day, to fall foul of them if she persisted in marrying her Russian lover; she had laughed them to scorn, and now—this!

The Count was absent in England on Embassy business. If only he were here, it would be more easy to bear this disaster.

Peter's feelings were by no means enviable. He had seen and spoken to the poor Countess in the forest during the night, and, though the Russian peasant is not a very sympathetic person, and has not, as a rule, much feeling for the woes of others, yet his conscience smote him sorely to see the grief of his mistress. He had not intended, of course, that the child should be lost, and he still had hopes of finding him; but for the present he could do and say nothing to soothe the poor mother, and for once Peter felt thoroughly ashamed of himself and of the greed for gain which had led up to this miserable state of affairs. The sense of remorse did not pass quickly from his heart, but lingered there, and brought about results in after days which have a close connection with our tale. He

did not, however, at this time make any confession of his sin, nor allow the Countess to suspect that he knew more of little Mark's fate than he had as yet disclosed. As a matter of fact he did not know much, though he was well aware that the child had not been snapped up by a bear or wolf, as was generally supposed. Had he but told the simple truth, the mere certainty that Mark had been carried away from the hut instead of eaten by wild beasts would have been the cause of the greatest happiness to the Countess, and might perhaps have ended in the child's recovery, for the mother would never have rested until her little one had been traced and recovered; but Peter dared not tell the truth, and his cowardice nearly broke the heart of his master and mistress. He was not clever enough to realise that this was so, and that the truth would have been not only the most merciful, but also by far the most profitable course for himself. He made cautious inquiries, however, in the villages around, but these led to no discoveries; the days lengthened into weeks, and these into months, and years passed and nothing was heard of little Count Mark, who was quite as thoroughly 'given up' as though he were indeed dead, whereas—well, as you are now about to be shown, he was neither dead nor buried, but very much alive indeed.

CHAPTER IV.

The little hut in mid-forest stood within hail of a road, but was, in spite of that fact, usually as solitary a place as could well be found, for people rarely used the forest-road to Luban, the post-road being quite as short and less dreary. After dusk it was the rarest thing to find travellers upon the lonely highway, which made it all the worse for Peter that a pair of human eyes happened to watch him as he brought the crying child to the house and thrust it within doors, reappearing presently and departing again through the wood.

A gipsy-like woman, dark-eyed and tangle-haired, unkempt and unclean, sat by the roadside a little distance away, half-concealed by a bush. She had placed her basket of strawberries at her feet and was resting and taking a frugal meal after her labours; but she stopped her eating — almost her very breathing — to watch what went on at the hut. She saw Peter come and leave the child and depart, and she, too, began to wonder what advantage might be derived from the opportunity which had been suddenly placed in her way.

This woman was a stranger in the place. Unlike Peter, she knew nothing of the child, or indeed of the existence of the august personages, his father and mother; nor was she aware that so aristocratic a house as their mansion lay within a mile or two of this spot. But she judged in a moment that a child dressed as this little one was must come of a rich stock, and that Peter must have come either accidentally or by evil means into possession of it. Therefore, as soon as he was well away out of sight and hearing, she crept up to the hut and entered it, easily forcing the semi-rotten door in order to do so, and made an inspection of the little wailing creature Peter had left there.

Old Agafia was in the habit of looking at all things from the point of view of possible profit to herself. A long career of dishonesty had so blunted her conscience that the rights of others were matters scarcely worthy a thought. She observed with joy the fine clothes—the gold chain suspended about his neck; these were good things.

She hardly glanced at the child itself. She thoughtfully handled the gold chain; should she pocket it and sell it at the first opportunity? No, she reflected; the child should continue to wear it. When she sold the child, the trinket should go with him; it would add to his value when matters should come to a bargain.

Would it pay her better to strip the boy of his fine garments, and make what she could by selling these? or should she leave the clothes behind, lest they should attract attention, and take the child itself, reckoning upon returning with it after a while to claim a reward which would, she knew, be ten times greater when the reappearance of the little one would seem, to the broken hearts that had loved and lost it, like a return from another world?

Old Agafia was not long in deciding this point. The clothes had a certain value—certain but comparatively small. The child might possibly be worth his weight in gold. Why not secure both?

The evening grew chilly. She doffed her own tattered shawl and wrapped the little fellow round with it; this would both keep him warm and conceal his smart clothes in case of inquisitive glances while passing through villages. Then she took him up and carried him away, winding a corner of the shawl over his mouth to muffle the bellowing which Mark still considered it his duty to keep up, anxious, no doubt, to make it known that he was an aristocrat, and that she had no right to treat one of his standing in this spiteful and disrespectful manner.

But when old Agafia the gipsy returned to the wheelbarrow which contained her stock-in-trade of old rags, a few pedlar goods, and sundries, she reflected that it would, after all, be wiser to divest the child of his smart clothes, to tie these in a separate bundle, pop them securely into a sack where they would never be seen by any eye but her own, and dress the little 'swell' in a selection of rags from her own store. She therefore took this course, to the great indignation of Mark, who roared with anger so long as the process of dressing lasted. Agafia gave him a piece of sugar, which quieted him awhile, but Mark was by no means happy or content with the present state of affairs, and wished, in a semi-conscious childish way, that he had not run away from his nurses. He was too young, however, to think very much of such things, and within a few days, amid constantly varying surroundings, during which old Agafia wheeled him, seated on a soft heap of rags, through many villages, he probably forgot most of his former experiences. He did not like his dinners and meals generally, and he hated the clothes he now wore, but he loved the driving about, the new scenes through which he passed, and the novelty of the whole matter.

(*Continued on page* 42.)

"She wrapped the little fellow round with her shawl."

"The cart bore down upon her."

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 39.)

CHAPTER V.

FOR a fortnight Mark travelled with Agafia, who was now nearing her own village, having almost completed the begging, stealing, peddling tour upon which she had set out. Then an incident happened which was real tragedy for Agafia, though for little Mark it was but the true beginning of his strange career, for had it not happened he must eventually have been brought tamely home to his parents in exchange for a good reward. This would have happened during Agafia's next tour, some three months later, by which time, the old woman judged, his relatives would be ready to pay a large sum to any one who could produce him.

What happened was this: At the end of that fortnight of constant travelling, the old gipsy woman was one evening driving her barrow over a rickety bridge which spanned a turbulent little stream flowing through the midst of a village called Balagan. Little Mark was fast asleep in his nest of old clothes and sundries. Suddenly, from behind her, Agafia became aware of the sound of galloping hoofs, of rumbling, jolting wheels, of a drunken peasant's voice upraised in some wild rustic tune. She drew her barrow close to the single rail which served as parapet to the rickety old bridge, hoping that there would be room for the approaching cart to pass. Then she sat on the edge of the barrow, facing the sound and holding fast to the child, for in spite of all her blunted conscience and a soul hardened in wickedness, Agafia had by this time learned that she still possessed a soft corner in her heart for the little child who had been her sole companion for the last week or two.

She looked back along the road—was there room for the cart to pass without a collision? There was, plenty, provided that its driver slowed up and exercised reasonable caution.

Blundering down the rutty street and crashing upon the rotting boards of the bridge came the madly-driven cart, swaying from side to side. On it galloped, blindly, recklessly, the peasant singing at full voice his noisy song. So utterly unconscious of his surroundings was the wretched man that he did not see Agafia and her barrow, did not hear her cry of alarm as the cart bore down upon her, did not feel the jolt as his cart-wheel crashed into the side of her rickety little vehicle. . . . The impact was tremendous—strong enough to send the barrow and its contents flying over the parapet, or through it, into the deep little river that flowed rapidly beneath.

In that moment of anguish and terror old Agafia atoned, let us hope, for many sins, for—knowing that she must die, and in spite of the knowledge—her one thought was for the little child she had clasped to her bosom.

With a cry of despair, half prayer, half shriek of anguish, she jerked little Mark out of her arms towards the muddy boards which formed the roadway of the bridge. At the same moment the barrow, with all it contained, including her poor old self, flew helplessly into the water beneath, which washed them far away from the village, a drowned old woman and her earthly possessions, never to restore them to human sight, while the tipsy peasant continued his reckless ride over the rickety bridge and away, knowing nothing of the tragedy of which he had been the guilty though unconscious cause.

So Agafia passes from our history. Let us think of her kindly in spite of her blunted conscience and evil deeds, for the sake of the last conscious thought of her life, which was an unselfish one.

For Mark survived the tragedy which ended old Agafia's career. He fell against the rail of the bridge, rebounded into the roadway, and rolled into a muddy hole where the boards were worn. Here he lay awhile, howling; but presently, finding that no one attended to him, and that his roaring was producing no effect whatever, he stood up and looked about. He presented a peculiar appearance—had any one been about to see—for most of his rags had parted company with him during the tumble, and the few shreds of clothing that remained upon his little four-year-old limbs were covered with mud. He looked for Agafia, but she was nowhere to be seen. Then he cried again.

Ten minutes later the Starost, or chief peasant of the village, at the very gates of which Count Mark was cast, so to speak, upon his beam ends—the Starost Nicholas was just sallying forth from his domain in order to take a last evening look over his fields of growing rye and oats, when to his immense surprise there came toddling up to him a tiny boy of three or four years of age, almost naked, and yelling at the highest pressure of a most excellent pair of lungs.

Nicholas the Starost muttered a prayer, then he lifted the child and spoke kindly to it. Mark quickly stopped crying and gazed at the man's patriarchal beard, which was a shaggy, odd-looking thing and an unfamiliar object which interested him at once. Nicholas looked up the road and down the road, but could see nothing The peasant had careered far upon his way; poor Agafia was somewhere in the river, she and her barrow and the treasure it contained, including Mark's smart clothes. There was nothing in sight to account for the presence of the little stranger. Then Nicholas had a good look at the boy. He was certainly a stranger to the village. The next village was three miles off. How in the world had he arrived? He could not possibly have walked all by himself! Nicholas carried the child to the village inn and inquired of the peasants sitting there whether any one knew anything of the child. No one had the smallest idea upon the subject; he must have fallen from the skies, that was the general opinion among these ignorant folk.

Then Nicholas took the child to his house, and brought it into the living-room in which his wife Olga struggled with six brats of her own, all boys, and said through the clamour: 'Here, wife, see what Heaven has sent us, and you, ungrateful soul, complaining every day that our own six are too many!'

Olga paused in the act of shaking a shock-headed youth of five by the shoulders. The shock-headed

one paused also in his yelling and stood and stared. Then Olga rushed at the new child and snatched him up and hugged him to her good heart.

'The little darling!' she cried. 'But he is almost naked! Reach me little Mitka's Sunday shirt, you, Colya; the child is shivering with cold.'

'Ah! good!' laughed Nicholas. 'If you had said I had better have left him to starve in the road, I should have beaten you with the stick, for I will have my wife a good Christian. Give him food, Olga; Heaven has sent him to us.'

'Then certainly he must be fed and loved,' said Olga, 'though, so I still declare, we have already more than enough to support.'

'Doubtless,' said Nicholas, 'there are many persons poorer than ourselves. This is the child of some poor soul who has found that he can no longer feed the little one; therefore he has driven through the village and away, stopping but one moment to put the child in the road and leave him.'

Olga had been gazing at Mark closely, fondling him the while. 'As to that, you may be right and you may be wrong,' she replied. 'Look well at the boy, now; tell me, does he look like the child of a poor moujik? See his skin—is it dark like the skin of our own village folk? To my eyes it is more like the skin of a gentleman's child. Doubtless that is impossible; nevertheless his complexion is white as milk.'

Nicholas rubbed his head—it was his chief resource in all emergencies and at every crisis or difficulty small or great. 'Maybe you are right,' he said; 'I see now that he is very white and clean. But why should a little gentleman be found alone and in rags? There are fair peasants as well as dark ones. You are very wise, Olga, but you speak foolishly and of things that are impossible.'

'Maybe you are the fool,' retorted the wife with perfect good humour, for the Russian peasant will call his best and dearest, as well as his horses and cows and other live stock, by every evil name under the sun without wishing them the slightest ill, or even intending to be abusive. 'How do we know that he is not a stolen child, and that the thief has not dropped him because his conscience worked within him?'

Nicholas whistled, then he removed his cap once more and indulged in a prolonged rubbing. Then he half turned to the door, and, glancing slyly at his wife, bade her leave the brat and come for a moment outside.

'Timothy Shagin drove rapidly through the village half an hour ago,' he said; 'I will go down to his village and ask him if he knows anything of the matter. If he stole the child, he must have had a reason.'

'Undoubtedly, wiseacre,' replied Olga. 'He desired money; he would return the child after a while and receive a great reward. Maybe also the child's clothes were of value; the thief might have taken the boy only for the sake of his clothes, which he would have sold at the first opportunity, leaving the child to take its chance.'

'Mercy of heaven!' ejaculated Nicholas, 'could a man behave so wickedly?'

'Certainly, there are such; the man you named is a drunkard. Go at once to Ostrof, it is but four miles; harness Vainka and drive over, then you can see Timothy and make inquiries.'

(*Continued on page* 54.)

SIX THINGS A BOY OUGHT TO KNOW.

FIRST—That a quiet voice, courtesy, and kind acts are essential to a gentleman. Second—That roughness, blustering, and foolhardiness are not manliness. Third—That muscular strength is not health. Fourth—That a brain crammed only with facts is not necessarily a wise one. Fifth—That the labour impossible to the boy of fourteen will be easy to the man of twenty. Sixth—That the best capital for a boy is not money, but a love of work, simple tastes, and a heart loyal to his friends and his God.

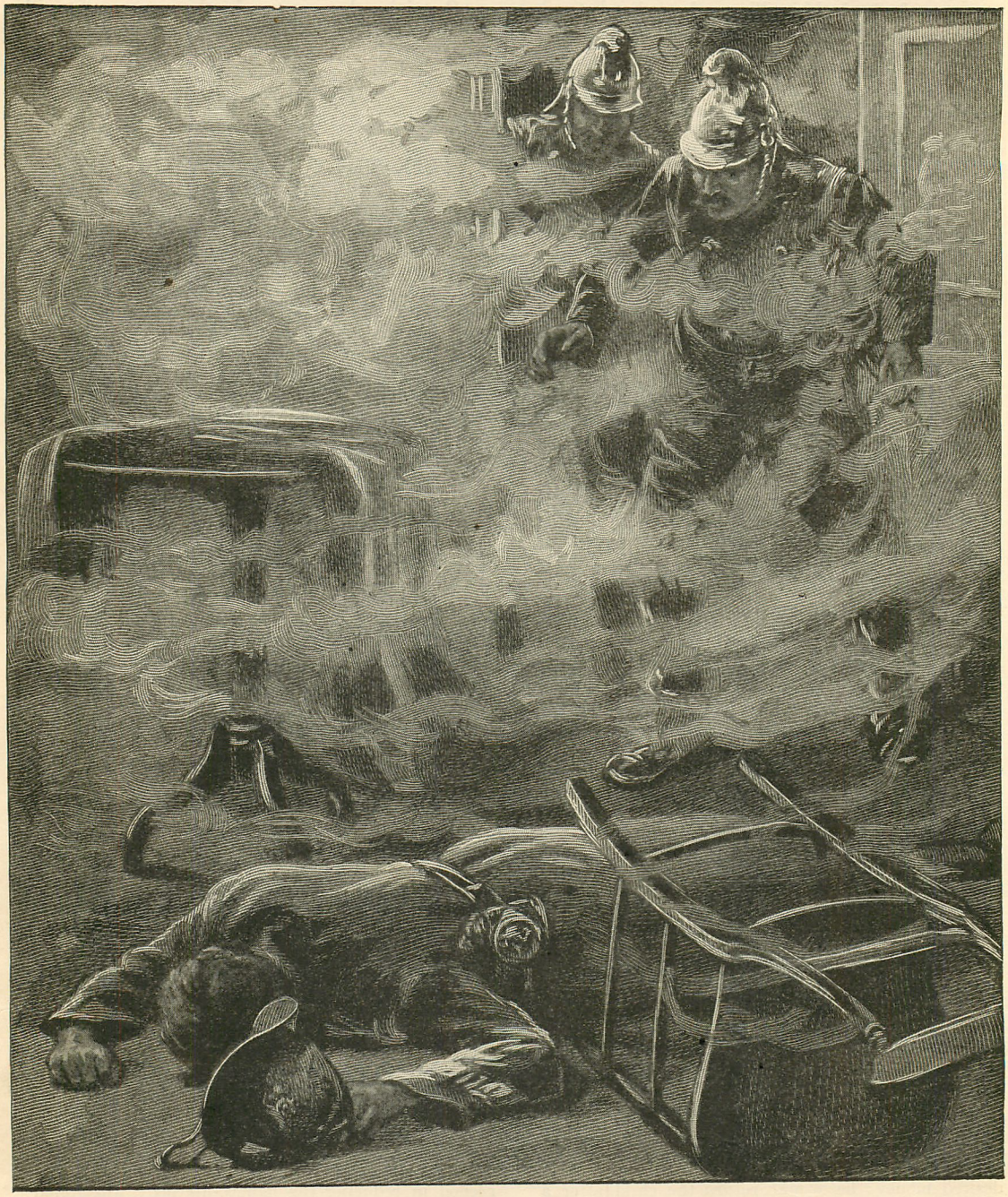
HEROES OF DUTY.

II.—IN THE FACE OF THE FIRE.

IN the very early morning of April 30th, 1893, a police constable walking in the main thoroughfare of Croydon noticed an unusual light glowing through the windows of a house occupied by a dealer in oils and colours. Scarcely had his attention been thus attracted when smoke was seen to be issuing from any crevice it could find by door or window in the building. Giving the alarm of fire, the policeman, whose name was Wright, hurried through an adjoining house to the rear of the burning premises, and, accompanied by a fellow-officer, broke into the cellar. While engaged here in removing barrels of inflammable oil, they heard some one cry out that there was a woman in the burning house. Without a thought of their own danger, the two heroes forced their way to the upper room through suffocating clouds of smoke. They knew that in the cellar they had just left there was a quantity of petroleum, which the ever-growing heat might affect at any moment. But the thought of another's peril urged them on, and they reached at last the living-rooms above.

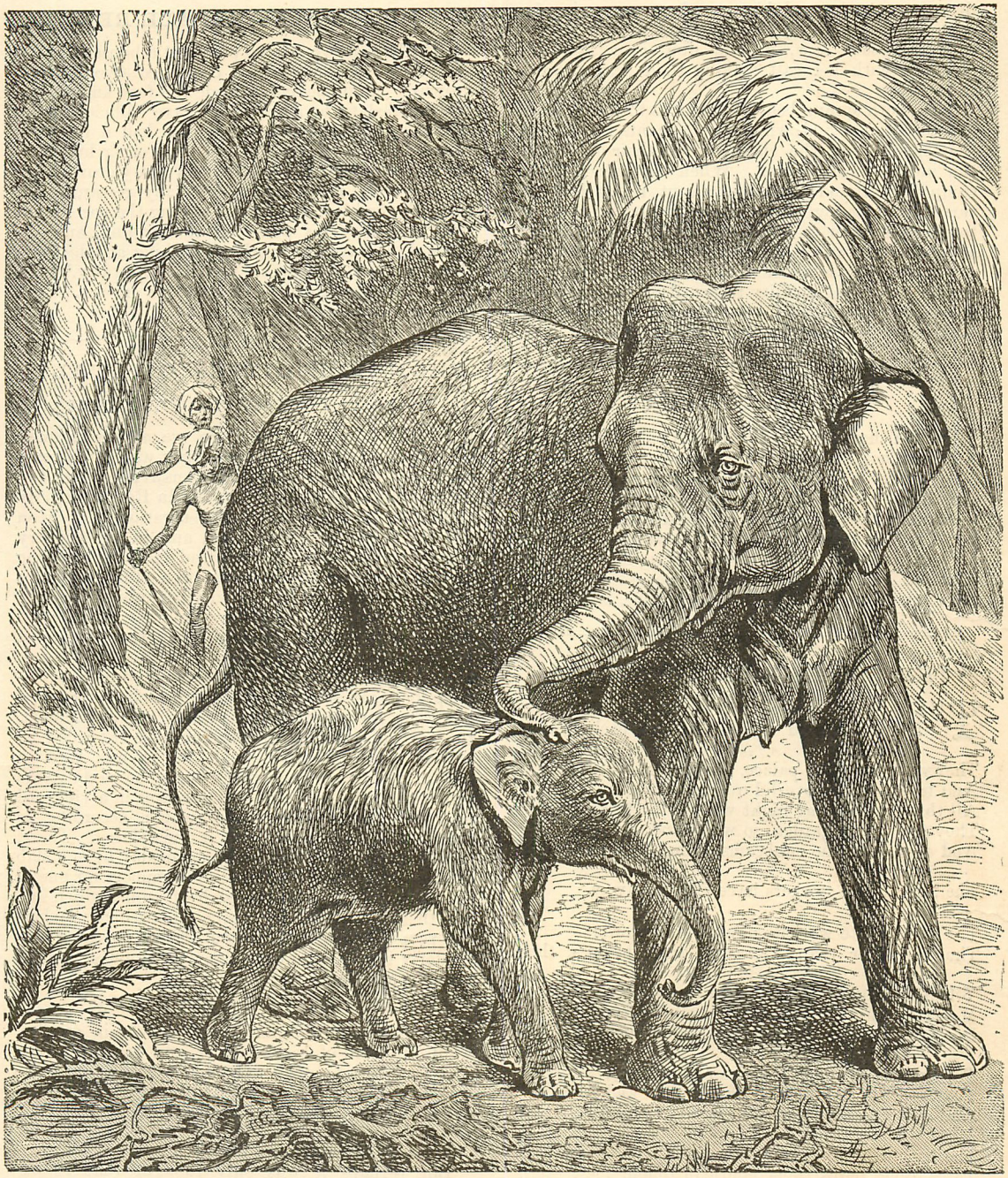
Yet the search, so gallantly made, was made in vain, and they were turning from the apartment when the terrible explosion of oil-barrels, which had been momentarily expected, took place. Almost overwhelmed by the fumes that arose, Wright's companion succeeded in jumping from the window into the garden below, but Wright himself was never again seen alive.

Some hours later, when the firemen had succeeded in reducing the flames, his body was found lying where he had fallen, a few feet only from the window, to reach which would have meant safety and life. For a moment hope was entertained that he might only be stupefied by the fumes, but the fire had branded his face and hands with terrible wounds, showing what a battle he had fought, and it soon became evident that he was beyond all



Some hours later they found him.

earthly aid. With this sad knowledge a sadder truth was learned. His self-sacrifice had been uncalled for. The person who had raised the cry which urged him into the fumes had been misinformed. There was no one in the house, the family having left it unoccupied since the previous evening. But success is not necessary to prove the worthiness of action, and Robert Wright, who gave his life in consequence of another's mistake, is none the less a hero of duty.



MOTHER AND BABY ELEPHANT.

A REMARKABLY intelligent elephant, working a few years ago on a new bridge in Ceylon, had a young one, to whom she was devoted. It died, and she became inconsolable. Formerly the gentlest of creatures, she grew irritable, and even dangerous.

At last she broke the chain which confined her, and escaped into the forest. Nothing was seen of her till one night, about ten days after her escape, the man who had been in charge of her went out to lie in wait for bears at a pool in a jungle at some

distance. As he and his attendant were returning early in the morning the attendant silently nudged him, and they saw, in the dim, grey light, an elephant with her calf making their way towards the camp.

They both sprang behind the trees to watch without being seen, and, when the elephants had passed, they agreed that the elder one was their old friend, the inconsolable mother. When they reached the camp they found that the truant really had returned, and had gone from one person to another, touching each with her trunk, as if exhibiting her adopted child, which she had evidently begged, borrowed, or stolen somewhere in the jungle. Her good temper and usual docility returned at once, and her owner was very thankful for the holiday which had enabled her to procure a new baby elephant.

ARMY HORSES.

EVERY horse in the English Army is numbered, and has its own little record kept for itself. The number is branded upon the horse's hind feet—the thousands on the near hind foot, and the units, tens, and hundreds on the off hind foot. Thus the horse whose number is, say, 8354, will have an 8 on his left hind foot, and 354 on the right. On what is called his 'veterinary history sheet' everything about the horse will, from time to time, be written.

THE LITTLE WHITE WORKERS.

THE little white workers so busy have been,
They've turned into Fairyland each wintry scene,
They've covered the palace, the cottage, the bower,
And laid a white coverlid over each flower;
All through the long night when I lay fast asleep,
They fell on my garden, so white and so deep,
And now that the sunbeams bring back the bright day,
The little white workers have all gone away.

The little white workers ne'er utter a word;
They're stiller than streamlet, than breezes, than bird.
When I am at work, and when I'm at play,
My fast little tongue it runs on all the day;
But the little white workers ne'er speak to each other,
The brother to sister, the sister to brother;
They fall through the air, oh, so silent and still,
And cover up mountain and meadow and hill.

The little white workers they teach me so much,
To be quiet, industrious, gentle of touch,
To hide away ugliness out of my sight,
And make all things lovely and stainless and white;
They are lovely to look at in shape and in form,
They are kind to the flowers and they keep them all warm;
Less lovely would earth be without them, I know,
The little white workers—the soft flakes of snow.

A POOR MAN ABOVE ALL REWARD.

A POOR man who was a porter at a house in Milan found a purse which contained two hundred crowns. He immediately made the fact known, and was applied to by a man who gave sufficient proof that the purse belonged to him, and had it instantly restored. Full of gratitude at recovering his purse, the owner offered his benefactor twenty crowns, but he positively refused to accept any reward. The man who had lost the money, seeing the porter thus positive, threw his purse on the ground, and exclaimed, 'I have lost nothing, nothing at all, if you thus refuse to accept so trivial a gratuity.' The porter then consented to receive five crowns, which he distributed among the poor.

FROM THE CITIES OF ITALY.

II.—ROME: THE SECRETS OF THE TOMBS.

SECRET as the grave! So we say sometimes, thinking of those stories upon which the tomb has closed for ever—riddles, the answer to which lies hid in some unnamed grave. But in Rome, that city of hidden stories, where one generation built upon the fallen palaces of another, and in the country outside the walls, where the dead lie sleeping in the passages winding and crossing each other for miles and miles under the fields and vineyards, the secrets are being laid bare by those who have the will and the power to search. What a fascination there must be in such work, when, any day, the discovery of some buried treasure of art, some half-defaced inscription, may settle a question which has puzzled historians for centuries past; when, at any moment, the patient, painstaking work may be rewarded by a find worth years of toil! So it was with a certain young archæologist who, some sixty years ago, was on the look-out for treasures in a vineyard near the Appian Way, under which, according to tradition, lay a catacomb as yet unexplored. There, in a common wine-shop, he came one day upon a slab of stone which had been used as a support for one of the casks. Just a broken slab of stone, which had lain there unnoticed for years, upon which numberless people had looked without seeing anything particularly interesting about the inscription straggling across the surface:—

'. . . . ELIUS . MARTYR.'

But the young antiquary, with his brain on fire, went off to tell of his discovery, and beg for money to follow up the clue. His hopes rose high as he was listened to patiently, then dropped to the ground again as, like a dash of cold water, came the chilling reply,—

'Dreams of an archæologist.'

But perhaps it was only thought that so expensive an enthusiasm needed a little restraint, for on this occasion, at any rate, deeds proved better than words. The vineyard was bought, and the excavations began.

Three years later came a proud day for the man who had set the search on foot, when, after guiding a company of experts through the passages of a

newly discovered catacomb to a tomb of the deepest interest, long sought for but never before located, he pointed to the united halves of the broken stone, across which the words 'Cornelius, Martyr' could be read by all the world, and remarked quietly,—

'The dream of an archæologist!'

It was on a May morning, some forty years after the discovery of the burial-place of Cornelius the Martyr, that a party was assembled to watch the opening of a marble coffin found on the further bank of the river Tiber, close to the Castle of St. Angelo. The heavy lid was lifted, and the contents disclosed, and soon you might have seen this company of learned archæologists all gazing in admiration at—what? Nothing more nor less than a jointed wooden doll, a dainty little toy of a foot long, beautifully carved in oak. What a strange relic of the days of proud, imperial Rome! And yet that jointed doll seems to bridge over sixteen centuries, and to bring the little mother, who dressed her in the days of Septimius Severus, very near to our English nurseries. A 'best doll' surely she must have been, for the hands and feet are beautifully carved; the joints are still in working order, and the hair is dressed in the fashion which busts of the Antonine period have taught us to know. Little Crepereia—that is the name carved across the marble coffin—must have had well-to-do parents or kinsfolk, who could rejoice her heart with such a delightful toy. Doubtless the doll once wore the graceful robes of a Roman lady, destroyed long since by the water which has dripped into the coffin, and, fastened still to one wooden hand, are the rings on which the Roman matron carried her keys.

Can we not picture great games, in which Crepereia and her companions kept house, unlocked stores, and gave sumptuous entertainments with the jointed lady for the mistress of some stately mansion on the Aventine or the Esquiline hills?

So much we can guess about the childhood of the maiden of imperial Rome; but the opened tomb has more to tell. Crepereia had done with doll-dressing before she was laid in her grave beside the Tiber, and had begun to take more interest in dressing herself. Here, in her beautiful inlaid toilet-case, are her combs, her hand-glass of polished steel, the amber pin that fastened her hair. What did she keep in this dainty silver box? Not rouge, let us hope; perhaps it was some Roman equivalent for cold cream, against the days when the sharp winds swept down from the snowy Mount Soracte across the Campagna, and played tricks with her lips and fingers. But there is more yet to come. Bound about the brow of the dead maiden is a myrtle wreath, fastened with a clasp of silver—a bridal crown. She should have been a bride then, this Crepereia; there was some one for whose sake she combed and curled her locks, and decked herself with the gold and pearl ear-rings, the necklace of jasper, and brooch of amethyst, which look so strange and ghastly in her coffin. And here we have his name, Philetus, engraved upon the ring she wears, kept in place by another ring, an engagement ring, the experts tell us, with clasped hands in red jasper. From playing at dolls'-house-keeping, Crepereia was going to keep a house of her own, and the doll of the old games would have been laid, as Roman brides were wont to lay their childish toys, upon the altar of Venus or Diana. But the story ended too soon, and the betrothed maiden, with her little possessions beside her and the myrtle wreath upon her brow, was laid to rest beside the yellow river, to sleep there undisturbed until, nearly sixteen hundred years later, a party of archæologists should stand around her coffin and spell out, bit by bit, that old story of love and loss.

But it is not only such simple records as these that come to light from the opened tombs. Now and again we hear of a question, debated among scholars for centuries, being settled for ever, perhaps of a character cleared or condemned, of some man or woman to whom earth's judgment matters very little now, being awarded the right place at last.

It was during the evil reign of the Emperor Domitian that the Court, then at the Emperor's country villa at Albanum, were entertained by the spectacle of a fight in the amphitheatre, where a noble Roman was matched against a lion and two bears. The interest of the contest lay in the high rank of the combatant, no less a person than the consul, Manius Acilius Glabrio, one of a family described as 'noblest among the noble,' dwelling in princely state in their palace on the Pincian Hill.

A strange way, one would say, for the ruler of a great empire to treat his mighty men, but nothing was strange in the reign of Domitian that the Emperor's wild caprice, cruelty, or folly could suggest. So, in the amphitheatre on the mountain-side, near beautiful Albanum, in view of the wide sweep of mountain, plain, and far-away sea, Manius Acilius faced his savage antagonists, fought them, and beat them, surely to the joy of the noble spirits who watched the contest by the side of their tyrannical master, yet dared not applaud the gallant consul's prowess.

But, though Acilius had saved himself from an ignominious death in the theatre, we hear of him next in banishment, and, a year or two later, we find it recorded that Manius Acilius Glabrio, the ex-consul, was put to death, one writer says, 'for conspiring against the Empire,' another 'for following the customs and persuasions of the Jews.'

And so the noble Roman passes away into silence, with no voice upraised in his defence to explain how it was that the late consul, the son of a race which had shed so much brave blood for Rome, came to die as a malefactor in his place of exile. Never another word for eighteen hundred years, and then, under the Monte della Gioie, that same untiring archæologist who had proved his own dream true, came upon a Christian cemetery. There, among kindred and household servants, who took courage to follow in his steps, with words of faith and hope inscribed upon the walls 'for those that come after,' Acilius, the martyr, sleeps his last sleep. Through no treachery to the empire he had served, no following of evil foreign customs, but for loyalty to a greater Master than Domitian, the ex-consul laid down his life, and the story of his faithfulness unto death has come to light at last from the tomb which kept his secret for so long.

MARY H. DEBENHAM.

"He was matched against a lion and two bears."

"Mr. Lisle at once recognised his slave.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

True Tales of the Year 1807.

II.—GRANVILLE SHARPE, THE FRIEND OF THE SLAVE.

'THAT is a bad case you have there, is it not?' said Mr. Granville Sharpe one cold day in the winter of 1765, as he entered his brother's surgery, and saw him bandaging up a patient, who seemed a perfect mass of wounds. 'A negro, too!' he continued, looking more closely at the sufferer. 'Poor fellow! poor fellow! However did he come by all those injuries?'

'It's a shocking case of ill-usage, from what I can make out,' answered his brother, still busy with his bandaging. 'This poor creature somehow displeased his master, a Mr. Lisle, of Wapping, and he hit him cruelly upon the head and face with a pistol, and afterwards inflammation of the eyes set in; then, finding him practically blind and of no use for work, the cruel master turned the fellow out of doors to starve and die in this bitter weather.'

'I will summon him! he shall be made to suffer for his brutality!' said Mr. Granville Sharpe with vehemence.

'Unfortunately, he was acting within his rights, as the law now stands,' said the surgeon quietly. 'The poor fellow is a slave, and absolutely his master's property.'

'Even if he comes to England? I thought in England all men were free,' said Mr. Granville Sharpe quickly.

'No; the case of slaves coming to England and demanding their freedom was tried before the Attorney-General some forty years ago, and decided against them. I inquired into the matter a day or two ago, when first this poor fellow came to me. There is nothing to be done; we cannot upset the law.'

'Poor fellow!' again said the kind-hearted Granville Sharpe. 'Well, anyway, he shall not starve. I will pay for a decent lodging for him as long as he needs it, and that won't be long from the look of him.'

'I wouldn't say that,' answered the surgeon cautiously; 'these natives have wonderful powers of recuperation—it is marvellous from what injuries they can recover.'

The surgeon was right. Under kind and skilful treatment, the negro, whose name was Strong, rapidly recovered, and in a few months was as well as ever again. Granville Sharpe procured a situation for him with some friends of his own, and here the poor negro worked as a free man for wages, and was happier than he had ever been in his life before.

Two years had passed, when one day, as the negro was walking down a London street, Mr. Lisle, his former cruel master, chanced to see him, and at once recognised his slave. He lost no time in claiming Strong as his own property, and sold him for thirty pounds to a West Indian planter, who put the man in prison till a ship was ready to sail to the West Indies.

The negro somehow managed to let Mr. Granville Sharpe know of his pitiful state, and he at once brought the matter before the Lord Mayor of London, who ordered Strong's release, as the man had been taken up without a warrant.

Strong was simply overjoyed at his good fortune, and was stammering out his best thanks to Mr. Sharpe, when the captain of the ship which was to have taken Strong to Jamaica came up, and, putting his hand on the man's shoulder, said loudly, 'Now I seize you as my slave!'

But Granville Sharpe was not the man to allow this to be done without a protest, and, turning to the Lord Mayor, he charged the captain, 'in the name of the King, with an assault upon the person of Jonathan Strong, and all these are my witnesses.'

The Captain became alarmed, and, finding the negro had influential friends, he left the Court, and no more was heard of him.

From that day Granville Sharpe devoted his life to the cause of liberty for the slave, and, after some years and infinite trouble, he was influential in getting a decision from twelve judges in 1772 that, '*as soon as a slave sets foot on English territory, he becomes free.*'

But this victory, great as it was, was not enough for Granville Sharpe.

In his investigation into the law of slaves he learned much that he had never dreamt of before, but which he never afterwards forgot during the whole of his life. The appalling cruelty exercised by those who caught and shipped the slaves burnt into his soul, and he vowed—and, what is more, he kept the vow—never to rest till Great Britain had ceased to have anything to do with the infamous slave-trade.

The difficulties were apparently insurmountable, but Sharpe formed a Committee, and requested Wilberforce to bring the subject of the slave-trade before Parliament, and Wilberforce entered heart and soul into the matter.

The obstacles and disappointment would have disheartened men less in earnest, but these never faltered, and at last, after twenty years of arduous struggle, came the joy of victory!

On the 27th of February, 1807, by the law of the land, the slave-trade was declared illegal, and the applause which greeted Wilberforce on this announcement was, it was said, 'never before given to any man in either House of Parliament.'

Granville Sharpe was now a grey-haired man—prematurely aged by his labours on behalf of the slaves—but he did not grudge the toil; and if any man could look back with satisfaction on his bygone years, surely it must have been that friend of the oppressed, Granville Sharpe.

LITTLE LIZZIE.

LITTLE Lizzie was an orphan, and had to live with her Uncle Ben. Lizzie had only seen Uncle Ben once, when she was very small, but she remembered him as a tall, fine man, with keen grey eyes. He was lodge-keeper to Sir Anthony Merdale, who had a large estate. Uncle Ben and his wife and their two children lived at the Lodge, near the big gates by the drive which led to Sir Anthony's house.

Lizzie's father had died when Lizzie was quite a baby, and so she could not remember him; her

mother was a sweet-faced woman, who had brought her daughter up under difficult circumstances. The poor woman had worked and worked, scrubbing, scouring, washing, until she had made herself ill.

'Be a brave girl, my Lizzie,' she whispered to the child, as she sat by the bedside. 'Be a brave girl. Always be kind; always do your best where you may be placed, and things will come right.'

So on the day when Lizzie's Uncle Ben came to fetch her, Lizzie, although she wanted to cry, forced the tears back for fear of distressing her uncle.

Uncle Ben took her kindly by the hand, and she trotted obediently by his side. A short railway journey brought them to a small country town, where they alighted from the train.

'Here's the wee maid, Mother,' said Uncle Ben in a cheery voice, drawing Lizzie after him into the kitchen of the pretty rose-covered Lodge; 'here's my poor sister Jenny's little girl.'

Uncle Ben's wife, whose name was Jessie, stooped and kissed Lizzie very tenderly.

'Poor dear child! She looks quite pale,' she said.

Presently the kitchen-door opened, and a boy and girl entered.

'These are your cousins, Tom and Rosie,' said Aunt Jessie; 'you must be good friends.'

They shook hands shyly, and then looked at one another as if they did not quite know what to say; but that soon wore off, and in an hour's time they were all chatting happily.

Lizzie quickly became accustomed to life at the Lodge, and her cheeks grew quite round and rosy, for the fresh air of the country did her good. She used to stand at the big iron gates with her cousins, and curtsey when Sir Anthony rode or drove in and out. Sometimes a little girl came driving along with her nurse in a white basket-carriage, drawn by white ponies. She was a pretty, golden-haired mite, with pink cheeks.

'That is little Miss Kathleen, the master's daughter,' Tom explained to Lizzie; 'she was four the other day, and we had a special cake-and-strawberry tea in honour of her birthday. The master is very, very fond of her; I have heard Mother say so.'

'Where is *her* mother?' asked Lizzie.

'She has no mother,' replied Tom.

'Then she is like me,' thought Lizzie, and ever after looked at Miss Kathleen with great interest, feeling that she and the golden-haired child had something in common.

One day, in the beginning of the autumn, there was a great commotion at the Lodge. First of all a groom came riding up at full speed, then Sir Anthony cantered swiftly along the drive and dismounted, then Miss Kathleen's nurse, with her cap all awry and tears streaming down her cheeks, came rushing up. Lizzie peeped out of the window, and saw them all disappear into the Lodge kitchen.

'What *can* be the matter?' she thought.

She was proudly keeping house for Uncle Ben while Aunt Jessie and the children were out for the day. She listened and heard a great hubbub coming from the kitchen, voices raised high in dispute, but she did not like to go and inquire what was wrong. Presently, however, Uncle Ben came into the parlour. He looked very much upset and disturbed.

'Oh, Uncle, what is the matter?' cried Lizzie.

'Little Miss Kathleen is lost,' said Uncle Ben; 'she ran out of the nursery when her nurse left her for a moment, and she cannot be found. I am going to help look in the grounds for her. Sir Anthony is nearly distracted.'

And Uncle Ben hurried away.

Lizzie clasped her hands. Little Miss Kathleen lost! She sprang out of her seat. 'If I could only find her!' she thought.

The Lodge was empty as she hurried through the kitchen and out of the door. Every one had gone to look for the lost child.

'Oh, I must help too! I *must* help!' Lizzie said to herself.

She could faintly hear the searchers calling in the distance.

'They are near the big lake by the house,' she thought. 'Suppose I begin looking here.'

She pushed her way through a tall tangle of grass, stopping to call now and then and looking carefully about her. Suddenly she came to a narrow path. She was puzzled at first, and then she remembered that it led to a stagnant pool, where bulrushes grew in great profusion. Uncle Ben had warned her not to venture too near the pond, for the sides were rather slippery, and, although the pond was shallow at the edge, it was rather deep in the middle.

Lizzie approached cautiously, and stood peering about her. You may imagine how startled she was when she suddenly heard the sound of baby laughter! She held her breath.

The laugh came again, and then a pleased gurgle.

'Oh, oh, Kathleen is *so* nice and wet!'

Lizzie's heart went pit-a-pat. 'It *is* Miss Kathleen,' she whispered to herself. 'I have found her!'

Now, Lizzie was eleven years old, and a very sensible girl. She thought at once if she made the slightest noise and frightened Kathleen, the little one might slip into the deep water.

Very, very quietly she crept nearer to the edge of the pond and stooped. There, in the midst of the bulrushes, waving her arms in great glee—there, in the shallow green water, sat naughty Miss Kathleen, thoroughly enjoying herself!

'If I can only manage to reach her before she is startled,' thought Lizzie.

Gently she bent on her knees, supporting herself with one hand on the bank. Very gently she advanced the other hand until she had Miss Kathleen's sash within her grasp. With a big effort she dragged the child towards her, and before she had time to cry out Lizzie had her on the bank.

But how to get her home again?

'She must walk. She is too heavy to carry. I must take her to the Lodge, and get those wet clothes off, or she will catch cold.'

Lizzie made the little one, who was beginning to feel cold and damp and sobbing softly, walk as quickly as she could. Trot, trot, went the plump legs, and before long the Lodge came in sight.

At that moment Sir Anthony galloped up. His face, which was all drawn and pale with anxiety, lighted up with joy when he saw his little daughter. In an instant he was off his horse and had Kathleen in his arms, all wet and muddy as she was.

"'Have I found you again?'"

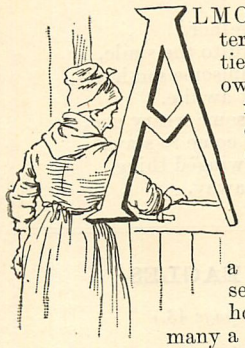
'My treasure! my darling!' he cried, 'have I found you again?' He was so glad to get her back that he actually forgot to scold her. Then he turned to Lizzie. 'And it was you who found her. You are Benjamin's niece, are you not? I cannot tell you how grateful I am to you. My little Kathleen!' He pressed his child closer to him. 'I will ride to the house with her. Good-bye, my dear. I shall not forget that you have restored my baby to me!'

Sir Anthony did not forget. He always took a

kindly interest in 'little Lizzie,' and when she grew older, he had her instructed in needlework. And one day, many, many years after, when Miss Kathleen was quite grown up, she married, and Lizzie, 'little' no longer, went to live with her as lady's-maid.

DOORS, LOCKS, AND KEYS.

I.—THE DUTCH DOOR.



ALMOST all doors have characteristics reflecting the peculiarities of the race to which they owe their origin. The special form known as the Dutch door is strong in the matter of good sense, being at the same time convenient, adaptable to circumstances, and picturesque. An illustration of one taken from a New England type is represented both from inside the house and from outside, and many a village in Holland still furnishes examples of this construction.

Industry and a capacity for useful inventions no doubt greatly helped the people of this little kingdom to the prominent place that they have for many centuries occupied amongst the nations of Europe, and the hospitality shown to religious exiles of various nationalities did much to spread the home comforts and the pleasant home-life of the Dutch into distant lands. Many of our own exiles of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries fled first to Holland, and, sailing thence for the New World, took with them many practical suggestions to be carried out in the homes beyond the sea.

Dutch Door from Outside.

Dutch Door from Inside.

Not the least valuable of these was the Dutch door, and if we consider its construction with attention, we soon see the special advantages it offered to settlers in a new country.

The long voyage across the Atlantic in the small sailing vessels of those days was a dangerous business, only to be undertaken when the storms of winter and spring were over, so that the arrival on the North American coast would ordinarily take place when summer was waning. The prospect of severe winter weather in a wild, unsettled country was very terrible, so the first effort would naturally be to provide more or less comfortable shelters before the snow covered the land with its icy mantle. Clearings in the forest had to be made, and the felled trees sawn and fashioned into wooden houses with all possible expedition.

Moreover, not less alarming than the risk of freezing were the ever-present dangers from wild beasts and more savage Indians, who, as if with an instinct that the coming of the white man meant their own ultimate extinction, ferociously opposed his settlement in their country. The Dutch door was exceedingly strong, formed of boards of oak or other tough wood, and crossed by rough beams of great solidity; but its chief value was that it was invariably made in two parts, opening separately, and combining a window with a door. When working against time, every aperture meant labour as well as insecurity, and so was to be avoided if possible; hence the Dutch door became the ordinary entrance to the settlers' home.

Both doors were hung on long, strap-shaped hinges of iron, the sides of the upper being of thick wood, and the centre glazed in squares, with shutters to be put up at pleasure. A huge bar crossed the door, fitting into sockets on either side.

The lower door was, as the second illustration shows, still stronger, being closed by a large box-lock, whilst a chain-bolt completed the defence; and when all was made secure the household within were safe from all enemies save fire, against which no wooden erection can be invincible.

Above the lintel inside was often placed a shelf, on which were ranged the little store of cups, plates, and jugs brought from the old country, so that the Dutch door not only implied a window and a door, but quite an ornamental piece of furniture. Across the glass, tidy housewives hung, and still hang, pretty muslin blinds to keep out prying eyes, and curtains hanging over the beams on either side of the door lend a warm, cosy effect to the interior.

Except in winter-time, the upper door is usually kept open, like the one in the first illustration; but at certain seasons, when insect pests abound, the glass frame is taken out and replaced by wire gauze, which keeps out mosquitoes, and lets in light and fresh air. When this is fixed up it is high treason in an American house to leave the door open for a moment, especially at night, when the lights attract the flying insects, and, whilst thousands commit suicide in the lamp-glasses, enough remain to make life woefully unpleasant for human beings.

A FOUR-FOOTED THIEF.

A CARPENTER had a small bottle of oil tied to his lathe in his workshop. He often found that, although the bottle was full when he left the shop in the evening, every drop of oil was gone by the morning. Who the thief was he could not think, as he always locked the door every evening. One night he determined to watch. What was his surprise presently to see a fine rat climb up the lathe and dip its tail into the bottle, draw it out, and lick off the oil. This it continued to do until the bottle was quite empty. It then ran away and disappeared down its hole.

TOGETHER.

'COME, let us go together,'
Said the raindrop to the beam.
'For I can give the moisture,
And you the sunny gleam.'
So they went both together
And cheered a drooping flower:
They made it bright and fragrant,
And sweet for many an hour.

'Come, let us go together,'
Said the kind word to the smile,
'For we can cheer up some sad heart,
And make it blest awhile.'
So they sought out some weary one,
And said, 'We've come to stay;'
And sadness, like a wingèd thing,
Ere long was far away.

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 43.)

THE Starost Nicholas drove over to Ostrof and interviewed Timothy Shagin, who had driven furiously through the village only an hour or so before. But Timothy knew nothing of the child—he vowed solemnly that he had seen no such person. There had been a gipsy woman with a barrow in the village as he drove through, but he had been much under the influence of drink at the moment and had taken no notice of her. Timothy had a vague recollection of having driven into or very near the barrow, but thought it better to say nothing about it in case complaints should be laid against him. To do him justice, he had no idea of the tragedy of which he had been the direct cause.

Nicholas was easily convinced that Timothy spoke the truth; obviously he knew nothing of the child. Then he made inquiries as to the gipsy woman, but could find no one who had seen her in the village. Either Timothy had been so tipsy that he mistook one of the village women for a stranger, or else, he fancied, the gipsy had been a supernatural visitant whose duty had been to leave the child behind her for some mysterious purpose which would appear later. In any case, the Starost and his wife agreed it was their duty to take the little one in and do their best for him, and, without further doubt or question, the superstitious, good-hearted Russian peasants contentedly added Mark to their domestic circle, already somewhat ample.

So with these good folks little Count Mark took up his humble abode, and with them he thrived and grew apace. He was not known by the name of Mark, now, of course, for the Starost, ignorant of his real name, gave him—Russian fashion—that of the saint upon whose day in the Russian calendar he had appeared at the village—Cyril.

But this new name very soon gave place to another, a kind of nick-name, by which he speedily became know both in the village and over the whole

country-side. The origin of that name you shall quickly hear.

The little peasant-count grew, as I say, apace. The life of the country suited him well; his appetite was marvellous. By the time he was ten years old his 'father and mother'—as they now called themselves, and as he called them—occasionally bewailed the hard lot which had saddled them with a child whose faculty for the consumption of victuals so far surpassed their means. They grumbled after this fashion only at meal-times, however, for at other seasons they recognised that the little stranger had brought them good fortune. It was a curious thing that since his arrival there had been neither famine nor disease in the village; the prosperity of the Starost had grown by leaps and bounds. He possessed three cows to-day for every one that had been his in the old days, and a far larger share of the village land had come his way besides, for, as the father of six sons, he had a right to claim a larger proportion of the communal acres than most of the other villagers.

And so things went on quietly enough until the new Cyril (or Kireel, as it is pronounced in Russian) was fourteen years of age, when the lad began to assert himself in a manner which somewhat startled the old birds in the nest—that pair of worthy hedge-sparrows who had never dreamed that they had reared a young hawk among their own bantlings.

CHAPTER VI.

Meanwhile, we must not altogether lose sight of the little Count Paul, Mark's twin-brother. This young aristocrat was creeping up the ladder of years of his youth under vastly different conditions from those under which his twin struggled through childhood. He, too, grew up into a fine, manly, independent youngster, and both in moral characteristics and in form and features the two were remarkably alike. But whereas Paul enjoyed the advantage of every kind of luxury in the matter of his education, having masters and tutors in every useful branch of learning, and perhaps in some that were of little or no use, the poor peasant brother received no teaching whatever, except some few smatterings of the elements of religion which he picked up. He learnt plenty of forest craft and out-of-door knowledge, but otherwise remained completely ignorant. At the age of fourteen Mark could neither read nor write, while his brother Paul, in his mansions in London, St. Petersburg, and at the Count's country estate, knew most things that can be crammed into a brain of that age.

But, in spite of the refining influence of education and aristocratic surroundings, young Paul retained one trait which must have been born in both lads, for, far away in his peasant circle, his brother showed that he possessed it as clearly marked as he, or even more clearly. This was an utter lack of respect for those in authority, as such, and an intense love for independence and an equally intense hatred of interference.

Paul showed it in his attitude towards his teachers and masters, some of whom he led a terrible life. His peasant brother showed the same quality in various ways and actions which are now about to be described.

Though affectionate and kind towards his parents, as he supposed them to be, 'Kireel' had from the first been a handful to manage. He would stand neither scolding nor dictating from the Starost, and took rebuke only moderately well from Olga, the Starost's wife. For the rest, if any other member of the village community offended him, the lad 'went for' the offender, for he was unusually tall and strong. He was soon recognised as the champion fighter of his age, whether in his own village or throughout the district, and at the age of fourteen he was known far and wide for his prowess in running, jumping, swimming, fighting, and all kindred sports, and—to the pride and delight of the old Starost and his wife—had become possessor of the honourable title of 'Tsarsky Oriol,' which means the Royal Eagle, and by his companions was generally spoken of and to as 'Oriol,' a nick-name which pleased him well and caused him no little pride and satisfaction.

It was at the age of sixteen that Oriol, or the Eagle, had his first collision with authority. Walking aimlessly over the country one afternoon, Mark came upon the village herdsman asleep while on duty watching the flocks and herds of the community as they grazed in the fields. Thought Mark, 'This rascal shall be punished for his carelessness,' and forthwith he drove every cow and horse in the herd into the adjoining fields of growing oats and rye, in order to show the fellow what was the result of his failure in duty towards his employers. One of the owners of the rye-patches trampled by the herd observed Oriol engaged upon this enterprise, a kind of object-lesson which appeared to the boy to be necessary for the real good of the herdsman; but the owner failed to see the wisdom of the lesson, or the excellence of the motive that inspired Mark's foolish action. He complained to the Starost.

'Well, what would you have me do, brother?' asked the latter.

'Chastise the boy, of course,' said the aggrieved one. 'Must he escape punishment because he is your son? That would not be wise, brother, either for his sake or your own.'

'Certainly not,' assented Nicholas; 'but as for chastising, my brother, the last time I attempted anything of the kind my shins suffered so severely that indeed I would rather the aggrieved parties did the punishing. Whose oats and rye did the cows trample besides yours?'

'Sergie's and Osip's, and I think Ivan's,' said the other.

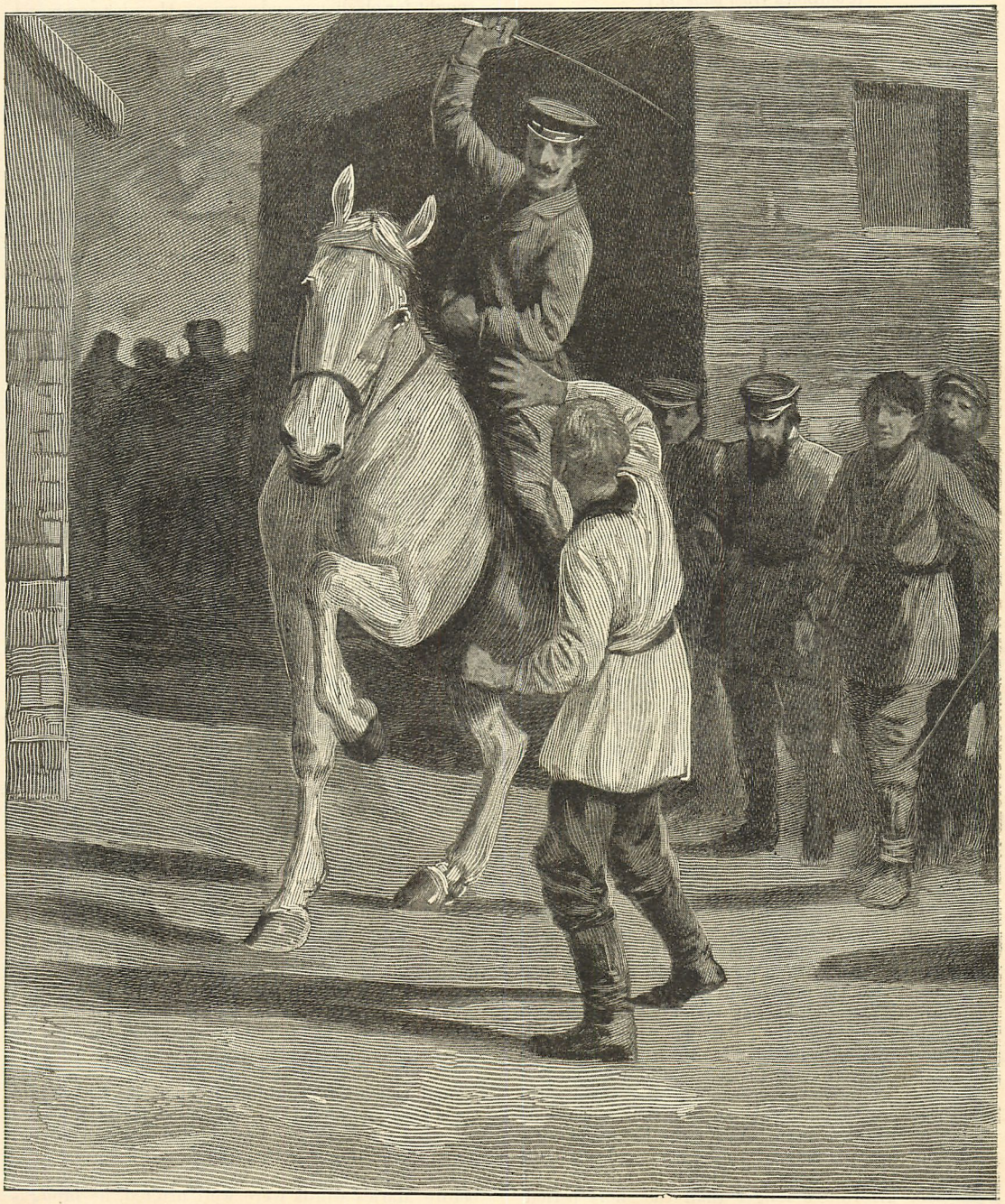
'Then put him in the lock-up for a day and a night,' said the Starost, 'and when he comes out beat him if you will, but with judgment and mercy, for he is a good lad and of a splendid spirit.'

'We shall see about that,' said the peasant; 'it shall be according to his behaviour; but whipped he must be.'

'Very well, be it so,' said the Starost, 'only let the whipper mind his shins, if he be wise.'

(*Continued on page* 58.)

"He drove every cow and horse into the adjoining field."



"He brought his riding-whip smartly down."

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page 55.*)

CHAPTER VII.

AS a result of the Eagle's cattle-driving, he was taken by force to the lock-up. Four men surprised him when asleep in his own home, and carried him off, fighting and struggling like a madman. In that lock-up he spent a day and a night, during which he had hardly once ceased for a single moment to bang and kick at the door, and to utter terrible threats of vengeance upon each and every one of those concerned in the offence of shutting him up. Next morning he was informed through the window that he would now be allowed to go forth. 'But,' said the informant, 'the *ooriadnik*' (the village policeman) 'will first come and chastise you to the tune of six blows with the birch!'

'He had better not try,' said the Eagle, who was chilled and hungry, but still full of spirit. 'I will thrash him if he beats me—if not now, then another time.'

The crowd of men and women and children who had assembled at the door of the lock-up to watch the proceedings, gasped aloud at this.

'You had better take care, *ooriadnik*,' said one; 'the lad is no common village lad, he is a Tsarsky Oriol; he is proud and of a dangerous spirit to offend.'

The *ooriadnik* was a small man, elderly and slight, and though he wore that overbearing, arrogant look of authority which nearly every Russian official puts on with his uniform, yet he glanced through the window at the strong and determined-looking boy whom it was his duty to chastise, and his mind was filled with misgiving. As a matter of fact, Oriol was as big as he was, and far more active.

'If I thought,' said the little policeman, 'that the boy was profited by the punishment he has suffered I would be content——'

'Neither I shall profit nor any one else,' said Oriol; 'as for beating me, no one shall do that while I am alive. If you try, I shall half kill you this minute—I know how I shall do it.'

The policeman hurriedly turned and got behind the corner of the window, where Mark could not see him. 'Brothers,' he murmured, 'this is not a case for me; the lad is possessed.' With these words he went, like a sensible man, to the village inn and talked it over with other superstitious wiseacres there assembled, the unanimous conclusion being that the Starost's foster-child was undoubtedly possessed of evil spirits, and that the village policeman had had a narrow escape of losing his life. Presently Mark was let out, but there was no further talk of a flogging.

After this episode the peasants treated Oriol with great respect; they did not like him very much, but they were afraid of him. As for the Eagle, he bore no grudge towards any of those who had brought about his imprisonment. He was not one to remember grievances longer than the short period needed for his blood to cool down.

But the fear and respect of the peasants was far from being of service, morally speaking, to poor proud, ignorant 'Oriol.' By nature he was arbitrary and domineering, and this tendency was fed by the attitude of the peasants, till he soon began to thirst for something more substantial than respect. He sought for obedience and service. He must command.

Through being unwittingly desirous to satisfy this wish, poor Mark presently got into trouble again, and this time more seriously. The principal personage in the district was the *Barin*, or lord of the manor of the place, whose mansion lay a few miles from the village. This Barin was, as a rule, non-resident; but he came occasionally to his estate, and when he did so the peasants soon wished him away again. For this was a manor-lord who forgot that the old conditions of life were changed, and that the villagers were no longer serfs, but free subjects. He bullied them and browbeat them, and caused them to work by scores at his improvements, and even in his fields, for low and inadequate wages. Of course he had no right to do this, but the peasants were perhaps so accustomed to the old serfdom, that they obeyed him from sheer force of habit, or because they were too poor to refuse the pittance offered them.

One day the manor-lord rode into the village at mid-day to collect villagers for some work required at his premises.

It so happened that the peasants had spoken this very morning, in Mark's hearing, of the Barin's arrival at the house, and had said that it was greatly to be hoped he would not require workmen now, just at harvesting time. He had often heard the peasants speak of the Barin before this, and during the last year or two he had occasionally wondered why 'barins' should be allowed to bully the peasants at pleasure.

Mark was now sixteen or seventeen, and had grown rebellious as well as domineering.

'Why should the men go, even if he want them? Are we not free now?' he said.

The Starost shrugged his shoulders.

'We are free,' he said, 'but wise peasants do not quarrel with the manor-lord who lives at their doors. He has the money-bags, and one year in fifteen there comes famine or disease, and who will feed us then if not he?'

'And the other fourteen years we feed him,' said Oriol, 'by working for nothing. When I see him I shall tell him that he is a robber and a thief.'

The Starost laughed; but it so happened that that very day, at noon, the manor-lord, Demidof by name, rode into the village and demanded men; he was making a road through his park, and required labourers. Mark was by, and Demidof, pointing to him, remarked, 'This fellow would do for one, he looks strong and a likely worker.'

'Not I,' said Oriol. 'If the others are fools enough to work for nothing, I am not. I have told them that you are a thief and a robber, Barin, and so you are; for years you have stolen our labour and given us nothing in return.'

Demidof was a haughty, impulsive man, and before Mark's words were well uttered, he brought his riding-whip smartly down upon the lad's shoulders. The fire blazed in Cyril's eyes; with a cry of fury he sprang at the offender, but the Barin wheeled his horse with a mocking laugh, and Mark's clutch half missed. He clung on desperately with

one hand, however, and it was only by causing his horse to turn round in a circle that Demidof succeeded in ridding himself of the furious youth. During the struggle, however, he contrived to inflict some half-dozen strokes of the whip — Mark counted them and remembered—before he wrenched himself free and rode down the street, leaving the angry lad panting and blind with passion, but speechless for the time.

'We shall see whether you will come when I summon you to the mansion,' Demidof shouted back over his shoulder.

This was the incident which formed, as it were, the diving-board from which poor Mark plunged into the dark and unknown waters of his career. There were, indeed, many deadly perils and terrible adventures before poor Mark. Meanwhile his struggle with the lord of the manor produced immediate results.

(*Continued on page* 67.)

SOME OF NATURE'S MARVELS.

II.—FORAMINIFERA.

IN the first chapter in this series we showed that the mud which we spurn with our feet may be made up of the bodies of tiny creatures ('Radiolarians') which lived and died ages ago, while a large part of the earth's crust is made up of hard rocks composed of similar skeletons. But besides these there were, and are, equally tiny creatures which have played, and are playing, a no less distinguished part, without honour and without reward. These are known among scientific men as Foraminifera. Like the Radiolarians, these creatures are, for the most part, infinitely small. Some, however, are relatively of enormous size, being larger than a five-shilling piece. The pictures given here show highly magnified microscopic forms as well as the giants of the tribe. While they have not either the marvellous variety in shape, or the loveliness of the Radiolarians, these tiny creatures are yet often of great beauty. If, however, they suffer somewhat by this comparison, they lose nothing in importance when we come to consider the part they have played in building up the habitable part of this earth of ours.

Though mainly sea-dwellers, some of the Foraminifera are found in our fresh waters, but these are of a humbler race. In the first place, they have no hard skeleton, or else one so delicate as to be hard to find: they consist, indeed, simply of a mass of living jelly. But their sea-dwelling relatives are more distinguished, most of them possessing a hard skeleton. This skeleton, which takes the form of a shell of varying shape, is remarkable for the fact that it is pierced by one or more minute holes, and hence the name Foraminifera, which means pierced with holes, or 'foramina.' Through these holes, as with the Radiolarians, long, streaming and thread-like masses of jelly are thrust (fig. 1), which serve the purpose of arms for the capture of food, often consisting of far more highly organized creatures, such as small crustacea.

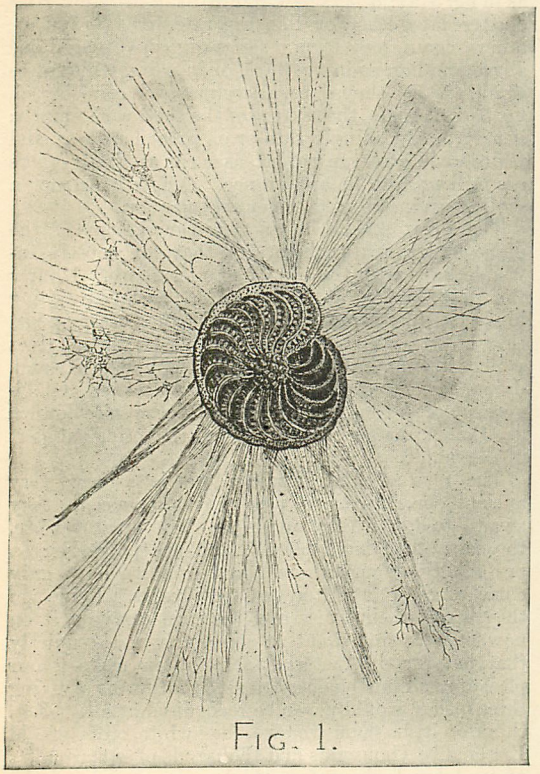
Some of the shells bear a remarkable likeness to the shell of the Nautilus, as may be seen in fig. 2; so much so that the older naturalists regarded them as belonging to the group of animals to which the Nautilus belongs—the 'shell-fish' or Mollusca. Others take the form of exquisitely sculptured flasks, as in fig. 3 (a); others look like balls of different sizes clustered together, or like separate balls (b and e); others, again, may form a series of 'caps' placed one above another, as in fig. 3 (c), or in pairs, while some again, are disc-shaped, or, as we may say, coin-shaped, fig. 3 (d). Again, the texture of the shell varies much: it may be exceedingly thin or of great hardness, and while some are transparent, as clear as glass, others are milky white in appearance. A few construct a shell of grains of sand cemented together.

The great oceans in the warmer regions of the globe swarm with them, yet they are mostly invisible, save with the aid of a microscope. Hourly the dead bodies of the smaller, surface-dwelling kinds fall like rain till they reach the bottom, when they blend with the bodies of their larger relatives which live and die in these gloomy depths, and, dying, they form a sticky mud known as the 'Globigerina ooze,' from the fact that the species known as Globigerina (see fig. 3, e) form the principal part of the whole.

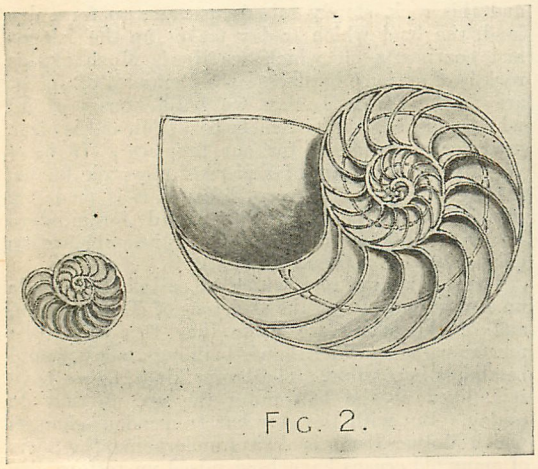
The race of the Foraminifera is a very very ancient one. In times past they swarmed as they swarm to-day. Yet humble as these creatures are, the part they have played, and are playing, is a profoundly important one, and this we have only come to recognise after countless years. Long ago they began their work, and they are carrying it on now, steadily and silently: so silently and so quietly that but for the fact that some of us make it our pleasure and our business to study all forms of living things, they would never be recognised at all. Yet, think of it, to them we owe the 'white cliffs of old England.' Thousands and thousands of square miles of land hundreds of feet thick are made up of the dead bodies of these tiny animals. Ages of time have caused their dead bodies to harden into rock, and this rock, slowly raised up, came to form dry land, the land which to-day makes up the islands and continents on which we live! Much of this rock is of extreme hardness: the Pyramids of Egypt are made of it! To-day we build houses of it; while, polished, it is extremely beautiful, and is often used for mantelpieces for our fireplaces. In fig. 4 you may see a picture of a piece of the rock known as 'nummulitic' limestone, because it is made up principally of the large disc-shaped foraminifera known as 'nummulites,' from their resemblance to coins (*nummus* is Greek for coin).

The soft kind of rock which we call chalk is made up almost entirely of the skeletons of Foraminifera, and of this chalk we make lime to furnish the mortar without which house-building to-day would be almost impossible. The larger kinds, as we have said, lived at the bottom of the sea, as they do to-day. But with the slow but tremendous changes which Mother Earth is always undergoing, the floors of many old oceans have been raised up to form dry land, while the land in other parts has descended beneath the sea. What is now the great Egyptian desert was once a sea-floor, and here lived in countless millions the giants among the Foraminifera—the 'nummulites' of which we have already spoken.

Now miles and miles of this desert to-day are so thickly covered with the dead shells that it is not easy to walk on them, because, being very hard and



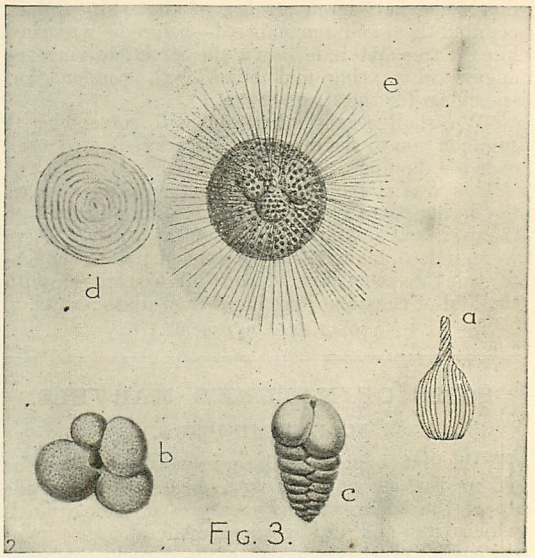
Nautilus Foraminifera, as in life (greatly magnified).



Shell of Nautilus Foraminifera, compared with Shell of Mollusca (a "Shell-*fish*").

polished, they slip from under the feet. Verily, then, the weak ones of the world have done more than the giants in all their strength!

One word more and we have done. These wonderful shells when opened are found to be composed of a number of separate chambers, such as



Various Foraminifera (greatly magnified).

may be seen in fig. 2. This shell bears a remarkable resemblance to the same section of the nautilus' shell, but there is an important difference: the

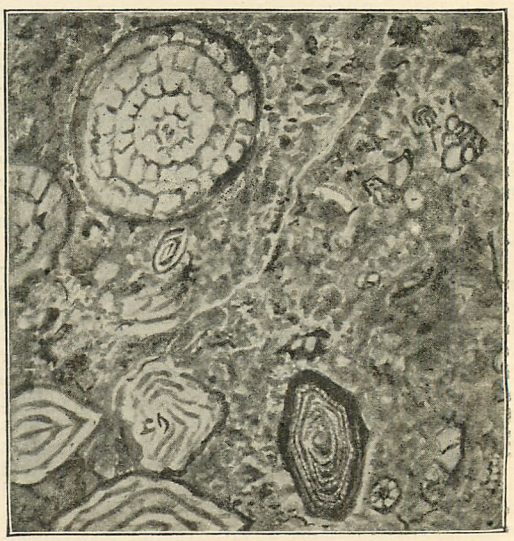
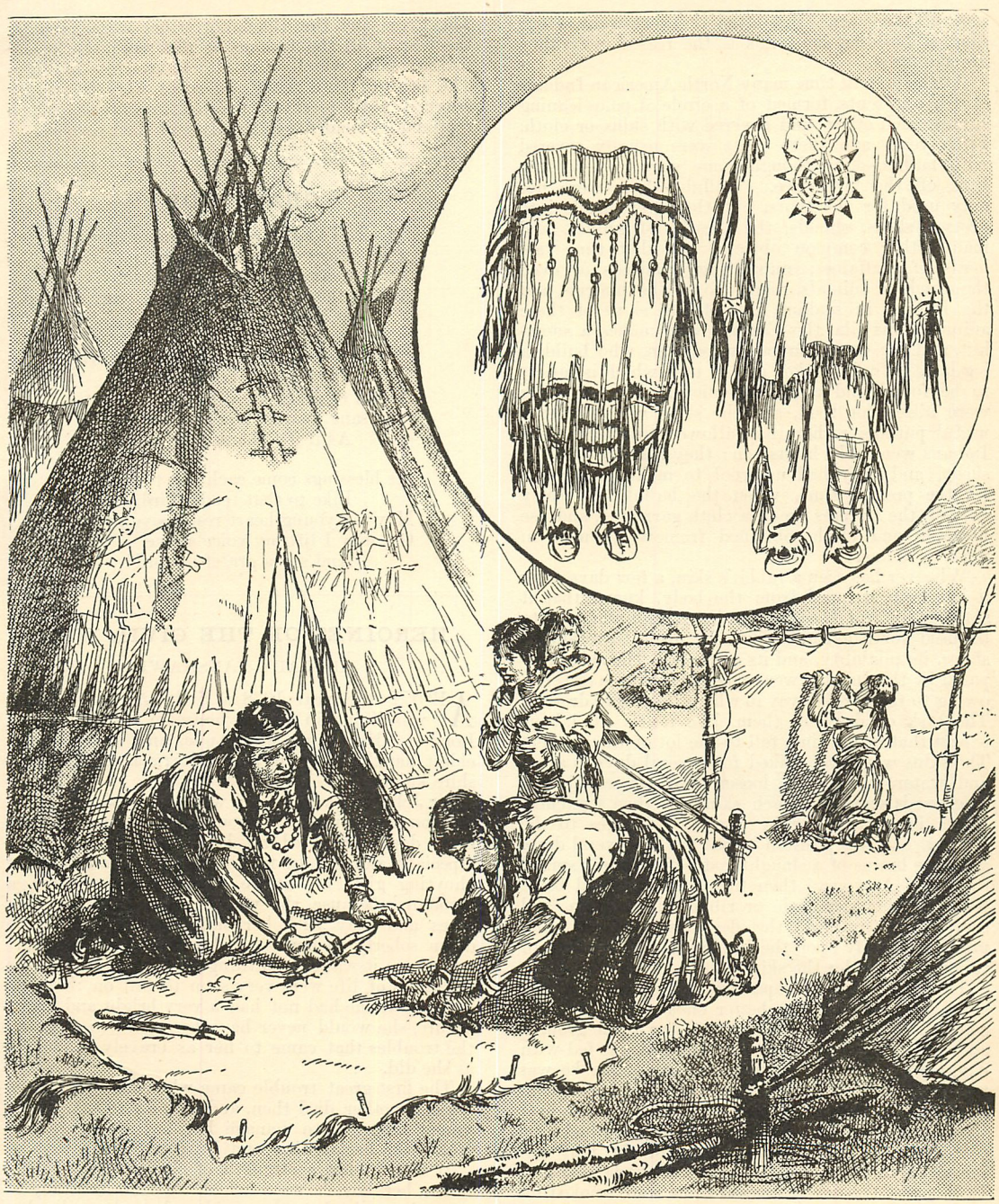


FIG. 4.—Limestone showing Fossil Foraminifera.

nautilus, which, as we have said, is a 'shell-fish,' lives only in the last-formed chamber—at the mouth of the shell—while in the Foraminifera *all* the chambers are filled by the living jelly which forms the animal as distinct from its skeleton or shell.

W. P. PYCRAFT, F.Z.S., A.L.S.



Skins were dressed and the better ones afterwards smoked.

INDIAN SKIN-DRESSERS.

A LITTLE thought will often show us the reason of a practice which seems at first peculiar. We in England build our houses almost entirely of brick, stone, and wood; and sometimes, perhaps, we are disposed to wonder why, in distant countries, so many people are content to live in mud-houses, grass-thatched huts, and even in caves. The reasons are often numerous, and one explanation will not

meet all the cases. But often the very want of our kind of building materials is the reason why they are not used.

At the present time many North American Indians still live in tents, formed of a circle of poles leaning against each other, and covered with skins or cloth. Fifty years ago these tents were usually covered with buffalo-skins, though some were made of the bark of the birch-tree. Buffalo-skins were not only used for the tents, but they were made into dresses, shoes, shields, the sheaths of knives, and many other common objects. At that time vast herds of buffaloes, numbering hundreds or even thousands of animals, roamed over the prairies, and the Indian, in making use of the skins of these animals, was like the Eskimo, who makes a snow-hut, and the Canadian backwoodsman, who builds a log-hut, he only makes use of that which is easiest to be found and most convenient. The buffaloes were killed for food, and the skins were put to a useful purpose rather than allowed to waste. The Indians were only huntsmen; they had no cattle or sheep, and they had no wool to make into cloth. At the present time, when the buffalo is nearly extinct, the Indians dress in cloth garments, and use blankets and cloth, obtained from white men, in place of skins.

Whoever has seen a rabbit's skin, a few days after it has been stripped from the body, knows that it shrivels up and becomes hard. A skin which is to be used for a garment must be made to retain its shape, its pliability, and its softness. The skins prepared by the Indians were excellent in these respects, owing to the careful way in which they were dressed. The task of dressing them, like nearly all labour except that of hunting, fell to the lot of the women. The skins were first soaked for several days in ashes and water, in order to loosen the hair, which was afterwards scraped. Each skin was then stretched, either in a frame or by pegging its edges to the ground. In this position it was left for several days, with the brains of a slaughtered buffalo or elk spread over it. A woman then took a sharp-edged bone, like the shoulder-blade or rib of the buffalo, and scraped or 'grained' the fleshy side of the skin, pressing heavily upon the implement. The effect of this was to render the skin soft.

This was all the preparation which many of the skins received, but the better ones were afterwards smoked. To effect this, a hole was dug in the ground, and a fire was lighted in it. The fire was fed with damp wood, so that a great amount of smoke was produced without much flame. A skin-tent, constructed like the dwelling-tents, was erected over the fire, and after the skins to be smoked had been placed within it, the door-opening of the tent was sewed up, in order that the smoke might be retained. In this way the newly dressed skins were smoked for a day or more. When taken out, they were finished. They had acquired in the process of smoking the quality not only of resisting rain, but of remaining soft and pliant, no matter how many times they were subsequently wet. A well-prepared Indian skin, though it formed the covering of a tent which stood exposed to winter rains and snows, remained always as soft and clean as when it was first put up. The Crow and the Blackfoot tribes were, perhaps, the best of all the Indians at this work, the former making skins which were almost as white as linen. The skins of both tents and robes were frequently adorned with pictures, painted in outline, which represented incidents in the lives of their owners.

GRATITUDE.

A LITTLE bird one summer day
Flew down beside a rill;
'Twas weary with the sun's hot ray,
And as the bright stream sped away
It bent its tiny bill.

It took a draught of that bright wave,
Then raised its tiny head;
A sigh of gratitude it gave,
And sang a sweet and tiny stave,
As if it 'Thank you' said.

As blessings come each day to me,
Like to that tender bird,
May my young heart responsive prove;
Oh, may I lift my voice above
And say a grateful word!

HEROINES OF THE CIVIL WAR.

II.—LADY FANSHAWE.

ABOUT the year 1638 a little girl of thirteen was living in an old house in Hart Street in London. Her name was Anne, and she was the eldest daughter of Sir John Harrison, a Hertfordshire knight.

Sir John was a rich man, who possessed a house in the country as well as a house in the town, and his little daughter loved all kinds of outdoor sports, especially riding. In fact, people used to call her a 'hoyting girl,' or, as we would say nowadays, a 'tomboy,' because she would rather ride and run races and play with her skipping-rope than settle down soberly to her lesson-books and her sewing.

Perhaps it was a good thing that it was so, because the cares of life were very soon to fall on the little girl, and if she had not had a very bright and happy nature, she would never have been able to meet all the troubles that came to her as bravely and nobly as she did.

The first great trouble came when she was fifteen, for her mother died then, and Anne was left, a very young mistress, to manage her father's house, and look after her brother and little sister.

It shows what a strength of character lay hidden under her boyish ways when we read that she at once determined to lay aside what she calls her 'little childishnesses' and become more dignified and thoughtful.

After her mother's death things went on quietly for a year or two, but then fresh troubles came.

The great Civil War broke out, and the nation was divided into two factions—Royalist and Roundhead. Sir John Harrison was a Royalist, and sided

with King Charles, to whom he lent money. This was a grave crime in the eyes of the Roundheads, and for doing so he was imprisoned and his property taken from him.

Then, for the first time in their lives, Anne and her sister learned what poverty meant. They had to leave their beautiful house in London and go to Oxford, where King Charles was holding his court.

They lodged in a baker's house in a poor little street, and Anne, who always seems to have been able to look on the bright side of things, has left us an amusing description of how they lived there. She tells us that she and her sister had to sleep in 'a very bad bed in a garret,' and how they had only 'one dish of meat, not too savoury,' for dinner; how they had no money and few clothes, and were 'as poor as Job.'

While she was at Oxford she married a gentleman named Richard Fanshawe, who was Secretary of War to the King's son, the Prince of Wales. He was much older than Anne, but he had fallen deeply in love with the bright young girl, who managed to be so contented and happy, even although she had to live in such poor quarters.

He was not rich either—no Royalist was in those days, for the King always needed money, and his followers always gave him what they could spare, and he rewarded them with promises of what he would do for them when he had won his kingdom back again; promises, alas! that never came true, for poor Charles never did win his kingdom back, but lost his head instead.

So Richard Fanshawe and his young bride married on the strength of the King's promises: they had only twenty pounds in the world, but they loved each other so dearly that Anne (who wrote the story of her life long years afterwards) tells us that they were as happy as if they had had two thousand pounds.

During the time they were married, Anne and her husband travelled about a great deal, sometimes together, sometimes apart, for Sir Richard (as he became) always remained in attendance on the Prince of Wales, and in that troubled time the Prince lived in many places. Sometimes they were in England, sometimes in Ireland, sometimes in the Scilly Isles, sometimes abroad. And as the years went on, and little sons and daughters were born, you can fancy what a busy life Lady Fanshawe must have had, often obliged to pack up her own and her children's belongings at a day's notice, and take long journeys with them, with few servants to help her, and almost no money with which to buy comforts.

Yet through it all she remained sweet-tempered and gentle, a very tower of strength to her husband and her children.

There is one story of her which will never be forgotten. One of the most important battles of the Civil War was the Battle of Worcester, in which the Royalists were defeated. Sir Richard Fanshawe was with the King's troops, and for three long days after the battle his poor wife did not know whether he was alive or dead.

At last she heard that he had been taken prisoner, and she determined to go to him. But just as she was about to set out, a messenger arrived bearing a letter telling her that he would shortly be brought to London, and asking her to meet him at a certain place near Charing Cross.

Anne did as he asked her, and, knowing how much the comfort of life depends on little things, she hired a tiny room, and had a good dinner ready when Sir Richard arrived.

He had been forced to march from Worcester on foot, with some hundreds of other prisoners, and he was only allowed to remain with his wife for a few hours; then he was taken to Whitehall, and put in prison, and very little hope was held out that his life would be spared.

We can fancy the agony of suspense that his wife endured. Every day she expected to hear that the order had been given for his execution. She was not allowed to visit him in prison, but she felt that she must manage to see him somehow.

You know the old proverb that says, 'Where there's a will there's a way.' She found a way.

The window of her husband's prison at Whitehall looked out on an old bowling-green, and a narrow alley led from this bowling-green into the street. It was late autumn, and the nights were dark. She was living in Chancery Lane, a good distance from Whitehall, but what did that matter? She loved her husband, and 'love makes all things easy.'

So every morning as the clock struck three she rose from the side of her sleeping children, and, after dressing herself, she slipped on a long cloak, and taking a dark lantern in her hand, she stole into the deserted street. And every morning, as the clock struck four, there was a gentle call at Sir Richard's prison window, which, luckily, was not far from the ground, and when he put his face close to the bars he found his wife's face close against them on the other side, and so they stood and talked with each other till the day broke.

For ten long weeks this went on, in rain as well as in shine, 'for,' says Anne, 'ofttimes I was so wet with the rain that it went in at my neck and out at my heels.' Was she not a faithful wife?

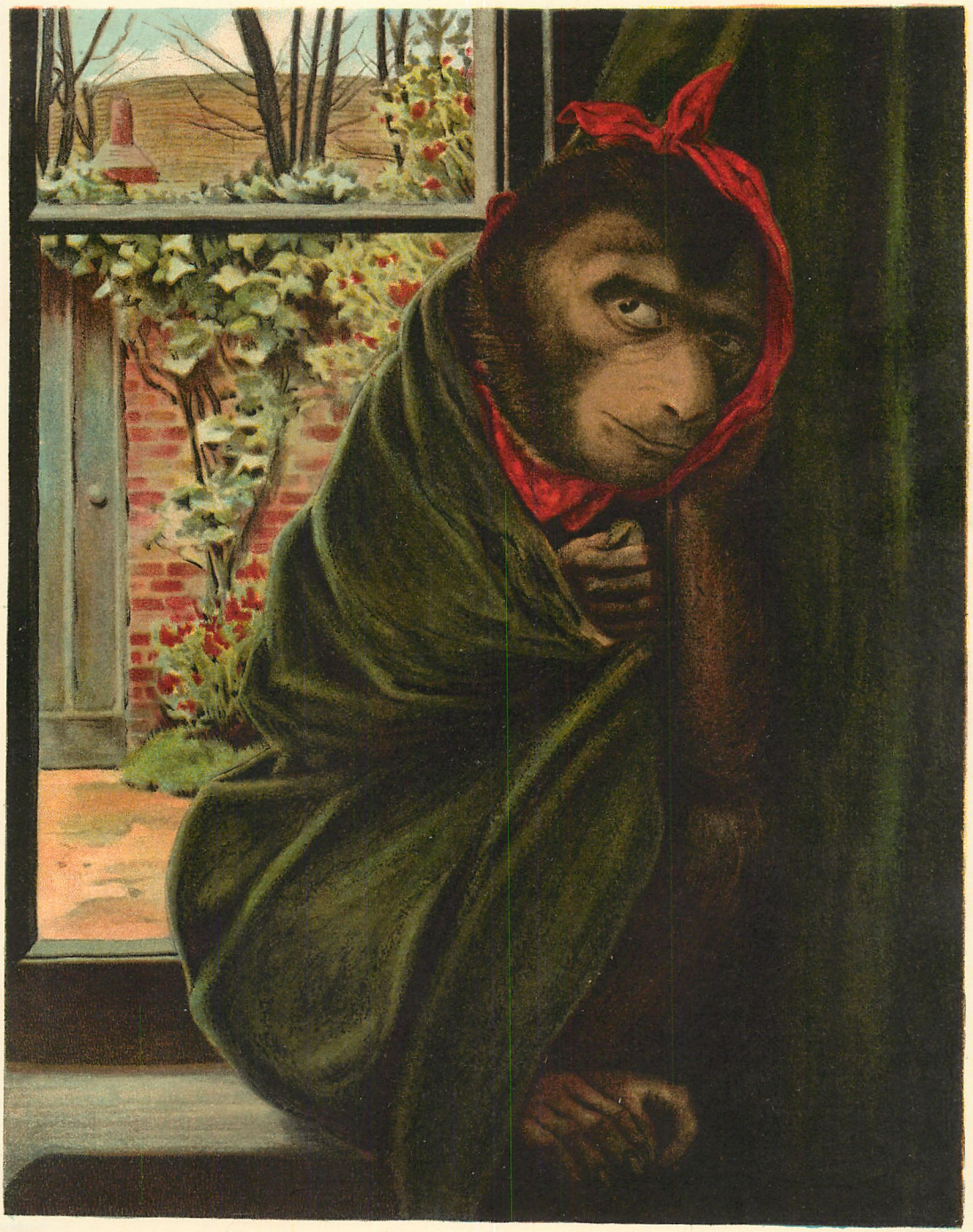
Not content with comforting her husband in this way, she did all in her power to obtain his release, and at last she was successful. She obtained from an old doctor a written declaration that Sir Richard's health was suffering from his confinement, and she appeared herself before the Privy Council with this paper, and begged the members to grant his release. They listened to her plea, and at last, to her great delight, her husband was let out of prison.

After the Restoration, when the Commonwealth was abolished, and Charles II. came back to England as King, Sir Richard was sent to Spain as British Ambassador, and his wife and children accompanied him.

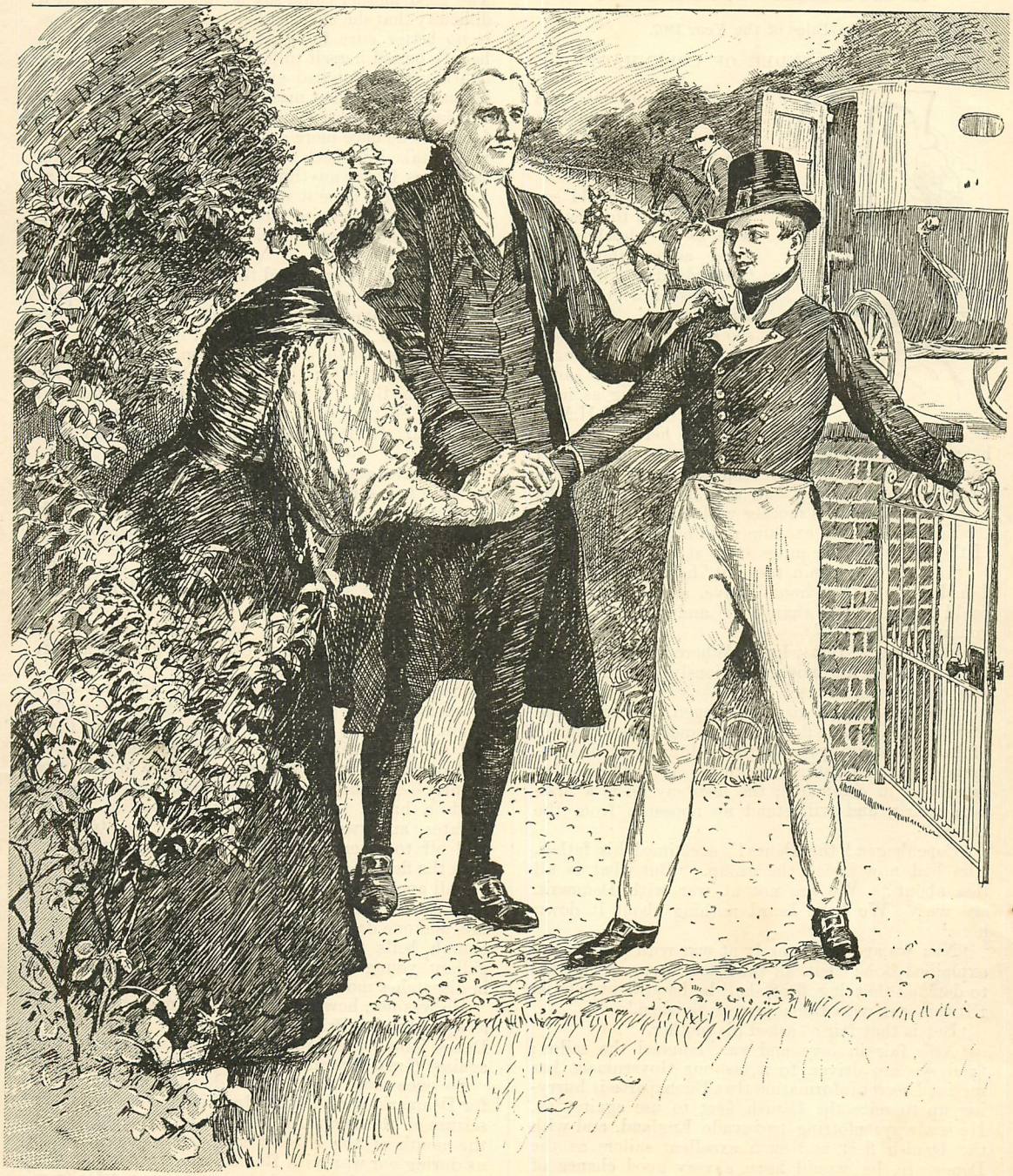
He died at Madrid three years later, and poor Anne, who was heart-broken, had once more to pack up her belongings and come back to England with her fatherless children.

She did not live to be an old woman, her life had been too hard for that; but she lived long enough to see her children grow up, and to write an account of her life and wanderings, which perhaps you will read some day for yourselves.

"She begged the Council to grant her husband's release."



THE SICK MONKEY.

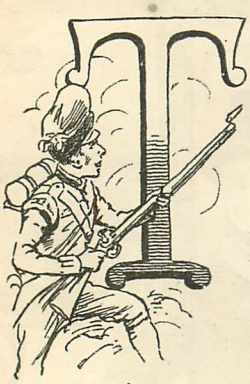


"'Good-bye!'"

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

True Tales of the Year 1807.

III.—THE SURRENDER OF COPENHAGEN.



THE summer of 1807 was at its height, and the roses of Rollstone Vicarage were in their fullest beauty.

'I wish Bob could see them!' sighed the Vicar's wife as she slowly sauntered across the lawn. 'He budded most of these; he had such a good hand with flowers.' And then she sighed again, and forgot the roses, and thought only of Bob, her sailor son, now serving as midshipman on board H.M.S. *Glory*. She was startled out of her reverie by hearing a post-chaise rattle along the lane which bordered the garden. It stopped; a young lad in naval uniform sprang out, and, lightly leaping the low wall, saluted his mother with a hearty 'Hey!'

'You, Bob!' she exclaimed, in happy amazement. 'I thought you were miles away at Portsmouth!'

'So I shall be again to-night,' he answered; 'but I had twenty-four hours' leave, and I thought I could not do better than come and say good-bye to you and Father——'

'Good-bye? But why? Where are you ordered to now?' said his mother anxiously, as she led the way towards the house.

'We are ordered to Copenhagen,' answered the midshipman. 'The fleet is to be under the command of Admiral Gambier, and the military force is commanded by Lord Cathcart, with Sir Arthur Wellesley as second in command; the men say he is a first-rate officer, and will stand no nonsense from the Danes.'

'Copenhagen! the Danes!' exclaimed his father, who had now joined the group. 'But what is all this about? We are not at war with Denmark, are we? We have heard nothing about it down here.'

'No; we are not exactly at war with the Danes,' explained Bob; 'but, all the same, we are compelled to demand that her fleet shall be handed over to us till this war with Buonaparte is finished.'

'But is that fair?' asked his mother.

'All's fair in love and war,' laughed the sailor; 'and we are driven to it, as our Government has received secret information that Buonaparte is hurrying up to seize the Danish fleet to use against us. He is always plotting to invade England, and with the Danish fleet, and such excellent sailors as the Danes are, he would have a very good chance of annoying us: so, you see, we must be first on the spot, and take the fleet before Boney can lay his hand on it. We sail to-morrow, and I have only a few hours to spend with you, but I thought I would have one look at you before I left old England.'

'Only a few hours! Oh, Bob! you must——' The good mother could say no more, for it was with difficulty that she checked her tears. However, there is no better cure for grief than occupation, and she hastily busied herself in loading the table with every delicacy that Bob had ever fancied, and seeing that he made an excellent meal.

'Good-bye! good-bye!' sang out the cheery young fellow as he once more entered the post-chaise which was to take him back to Portsmouth. 'I will write as soon as I have anything to tell you, and when next I come home I hope it will be as a lieutenant.'

Then the post-chaise rattled off again, and now the one thing the Vicar and his wife thought about was the promised letters.

The newspapers reported the landing of the British troops in Denmark and the investment of Copenhagen, the Danes having refused the demand to deliver up their fleet, and on the 2nd of September the bombardment of the city was begun.

A fortnight after this came the long-looked-for letter from Bob. It was headed, 'Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!' so that both parents could read on with a light heart, feeling the news it contained could only be good.

'We have got all we wanted,' wrote the lad, 'but we have had some sharp fighting first, for the Danes are brave, and no mistake. I don't know which fought best, sailors or soldiers. We began bombarding on the 2nd, and we did not spare shot or shell; we simply poured it into the town, and on the 5th the Danes sent a flag of truce, and asked for an armistice.

'"No armistice till the fleet is surrendered," was the answer, for Boney was every day getting nearer, and we had no time to lose.

'So the Danes had to give way, and our commanders went on shore to settle the terms of capitulation. We have possession of the citadel, the fleet, and all the marine stores. The prisoners are to be exchanged, and in six weeks we promise to leave the country—of course taking the Danish fleet with us. Such a haul! seventeen ships of the line, eleven frigates, and twenty-five gunboats! The *Glory* is told off to escort them into Yarmouth, and when once the fleet is safely anchored in Yarmouth Roads I shall apply for leave. *N.B.—I am a lieutenant!*'

Of course this letter caused great joy in the Vicarage, and one day in November of the same year the church bells rang merrily to welcome home the gallant young lieutenant, who had been mentioned in dispatches more than once.

He was not, however, to remain long at home, for as soon as the British fleet had left Denmark the Danes joined the French, and declared formal war against Great Britain.

So once more the *Glory* and other vessels sailed for Denmark, and the year 1807 is memorable for the seizure of the island of Heligoland, which, lying at the mouth of the Elbe, was of great importance to us during our war with Buonaparte, for not only was it a good base for our ships, but, being not far from the mainland, it was a constant reminder to the continental nations that there was still one little country in the North Sea which set the Conqueror of Europe at defiance.

MAKING AND MENDING.

'YOU are doing a capital trade, I should think,'
Said the grocer, Nathaniel Kirk,
To the carpenter who, with his bag of tools,
Was about to go home from his work.

'Yes, I am; you are right,' was the quick reply,
'I am busy as busy can be,
And my work, though it lies in the mending line,
Is as good as the new to me.

'And to-day to my mind came the solemn thought,
That 'tis better by far to mend,
Than to join in the making of certain things
Which are found in this world, my friend.'

And he smiled as he spoke. Then Nathaniel Kirk,
With surprise on his fat round face,
And his chubby hands under his apron white,
Stood and weighed in his mind the case.

He gave a few moments to quiet thought;
Then his eyes became extra bright,
And he said, 'I can see what you mean, my friend,
And, indeed, you are right—quite right!'

Well, they stood and they talked for quite half an hour—
The carpenter wise and his friend,
And their talk was of things we should never make,
And of those we should try to mend.

And the first on the list is a grand old fact,
And by every one understood—
That the making of quarrels is worthless work,
But the mending thereof is *good!*

FIELDS AND THEIR NAMES.

TO many a boy the word 'field' has a familiar and pleasant sound, for it reminds him of various places where he has played with schoolfellows at cricket, football, hockey, and other games. The hay and corn fields are favourite resorts; some, too, will call to mind fields where they have hunted for wild flowers, birds' nests, or butterflies.

We generally mean by 'field' an open space which is enclosed in some way or other, it may be with hedges, walls or dikes, or perhaps with ditches. Yet it seems that by this word our ancestors sometimes meant the open country, not particular fields, but just an expanse without houses. Thus, in one of the Psalms, we have mentioned 'the fields of the wood,' what might now be called clearings amongst the trees used for cultivation. Trees, however, are often found growing in fields or on their edges. Occasionally the trees of a field have given it a name, for many fields have a distinctive title; so we have 'Oak Mead,' or 'Elm Close;' or 'High Field,' from the position; or from its shape, 'Shoulder of Mutton Field,' and others as comical. Smithfield, in London, is said to have been at first 'Smoothfield,' the soft green turf being used for horse exercises.

'Close' is a peculiar word, for it is applied to places in towns and in the country too; we read of a Cathedral Close and Bartholomew Close. The word comes from a Latin word meaning 'shut.' But some writers think that formerly the field nearest a farm or homestead had that name; it was likely to be better guarded than those more distant.

We have another notable name in paddock: so it is written now, but centuries ago it appeared as 'parrac,' or 'parrok,' and this word was also the name of a family. Thus, Parrock Hall, Gravesend, is a memory of its owners in bygone days. Then, in another part of Kent, there is a place called Paddock Wood. Park and parrock are nearly related, and it is said that a parrok or paddock meant a small enclosure within the larger space of a park, where horses and dogs were kept. King Alfred remarks 'the world is a parrock,' which recalls the words of a well-known hymn, 'All the world is God's own field.'

Occasionally we see, amongst the fancy names of houses, some that have the word 'lea' as a part; for example, Homelea and Springlea. This name, written *lea* or *leaze*, was another given to meadows. Many such are recorded in old chronicles; thus we have eastleaze, crooked-leaze, cowleaze, beanleaze, and so on. 'Tyning' is another word with which, possibly, none of our readers have ever made acquaintance; it comes from the Anglo-Saxon *tunen*, which means to hedge in, and belonged particularly to fields surrounded by hedges. One more word, and that is 'barton.' Sometimes it appears to have been a name for a farmyard, but generally it meant the small field or enclosure where the ricks were placed for security. During the years when the country was not protected as it now is, the farmers seldom scattered their ricks over a large space.

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 59.)

ORIOL, or Mark, as we know him, was greatly looked up to by the boys of the district. He had so stamped his individuality upon them, that these dull, ignorant young peasants had developed, under his leadership, characteristics unknown to their fathers. They had grown enterprising and mischievous, active and anxious to excel in personal prowess. Mark had gradually marshalled them into a kind of little army of which he was the General, and he demanded and received the obedience of all. He had taught every one of them to swim well; there was no peace for any boy until he had accomplished the swimming test, in the turbulent little river which flowed close to the village, the same in which poor old Agafia had been drowned some years before. Every boy, too, could fight, whether with stick or fists, and though Mark could thrash any other, there were nevertheless some who could stand up to him and make a fair fight of it. They could all ride barebacked, and run, and jump, and shoot the hills in winter upon *ski* or snowshoes. In a word, whether by virtue of his English blood, or of his love and aptitude for hard exercise and competition of various kinds, Mark had contrived to change the whole community of young Russians into a band of boys resembling more closely English schoolboys than Muscovite peasants.

Mark assembled this little army after his disgrace, as he considered it, at the hands of the manor-lord, Demidof. Mark was ignorant and knew no better, and so perhaps he must be forgiven for the foolish and wicked things he now said and proposed.

'This man Demidof is a terror to the neighbourhood,' he told his companions. 'He ill-treats the peasants in an unlawful manner. I spoke to the notary at Novoselsk last year, and he told me what is the law. We are not serfs, the notary told me, but free peasants. The manor-lords have no right to demand service of us for such wages. It is robbery. It is because I told Demidof this that I was struck and disgraced. I will tell you what I am going to do. I am going to be revenged upon this man. No one shall strike me and not be struck again. We are told that it is wicked to cherish thoughts of vengeance, but if one man is to be allowed to make life intolerable for a hundred men—two hundred men—some one must put an end to such things, and I am ready to be that one, though but a youth.'

'What will you do then?' asked a pale-faced boy anxiously.

'I shall burn his house, and you shall help me.' The words created a sensation.

'I dare not,' said a boy. 'Nor I,' added a second—half-a-dozen make the same remark.

'Let all those who are cowards withdraw,' said Mark, 'but let them remain at hand, for they shall take a vow of silence before we allow them to depart.'

But upon hearing all the details of Mark's plan all but two of his companions preferred—very wisely—to remain 'out' of the enterprise, and to take the vow of silence in preference to joining with Mark in the dangerous and foolish adventure which he had taken in hand. All this made Mark very angry, for his autocratic spirit bore ill to be opposed or crossed in his desires. He insisted upon the vow, however, which he worded in as ignominious a manner as possible, which did not please the refractory members of his band. Then Mark and his two adventurous companions took counsel and laid their plans. The manor-lord's house was a great rambling wooden building, as nearly all the country houses in Russia are, and Mark thought there would be no difficulty in setting it alight.

'We shall take straw from his own stables,' said Mark, 'by night, and pile it under the porches, and wherever the building will most easily catch fire.'

'You don't mean to burn the Barin alive?' exclaimed one of the conspirators, pale and horrified.

'Of course not; he shall have a chance of escape—he shall be chased out, in fact, he and his household. We will enter the house before lighting up, disguised, and with sticks in our hands, and insist upon every one clearing out of the place. When we are sure that all are out, we shall go on with the business in hand.'

'It's fearfully dangerous!' said Vainka, one of the conspirators. 'What if they resist?'

'They will resist,' said the Eagle. 'All the better; it will give me an excuse for thrashing Demidof with my stick.'

Now, the two accomplices of Mark, upon thinking over the plan during the afternoon, became very much out of love with it. They would probably be recognised, and, if so, they would be quite certain to find themselves in terrible trouble. 'We shall get the knout,' said Vainka, all of a tremble, 'and probably be sent to Siberia besides.'

'I don't see why the Eagle should always be obeyed,' whispered Colka, the other boy. Colka was always somewhat jealous of Mark, though, like the rest, he had a great admiration for him. 'I don't wish to pass the rest of my life in Siberia—one never returns, you know. Demidof has pistols and guns in the house, too; Timothy, the gardener, told me so. If not killed outright, we are sure to be caught. We were fools to agree.'

'It is not too late to become wise!' said Vainka, with a meaning glance at Colka.

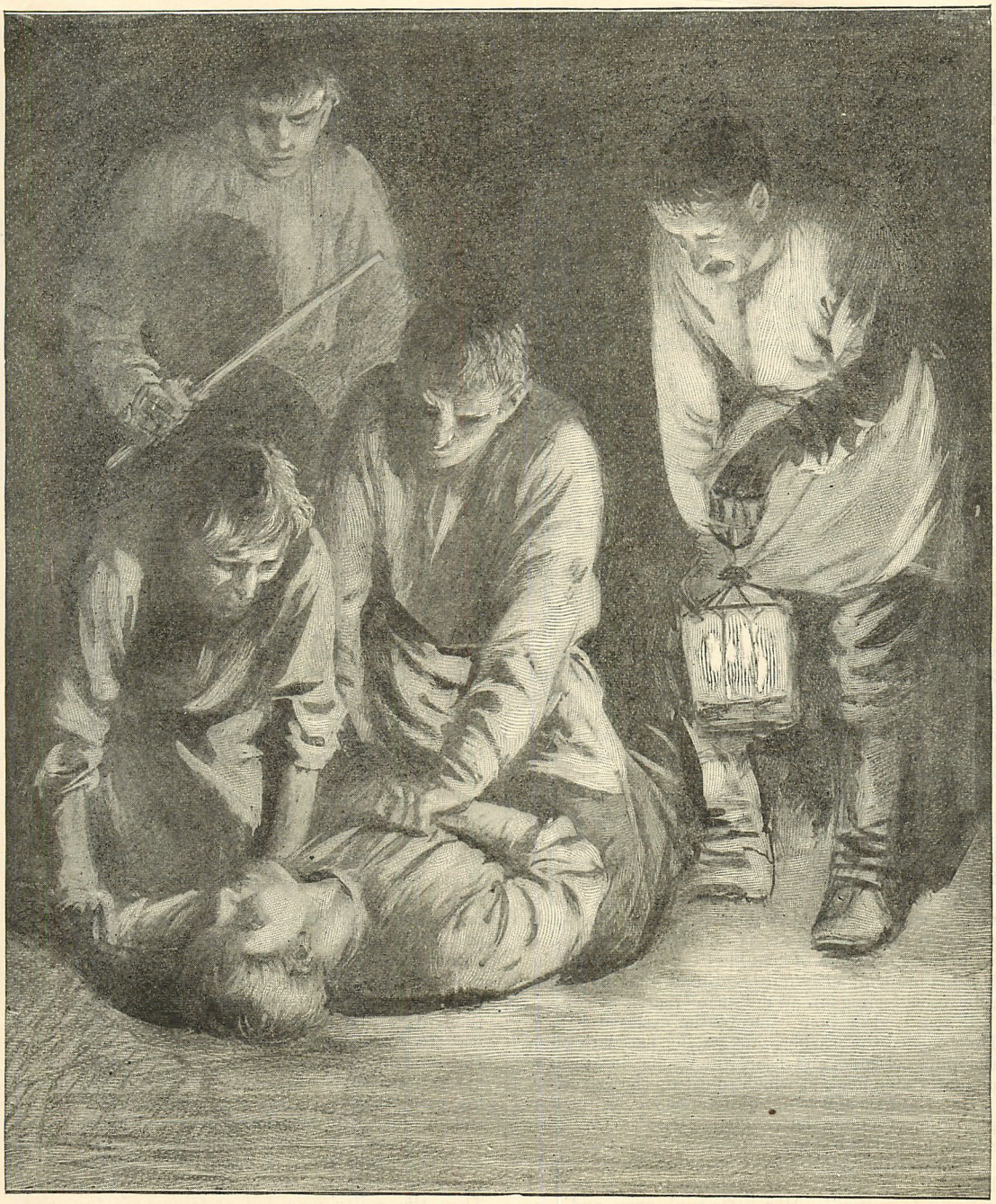
'That is also true,' replied Colka. 'Come where no one can see or hear us, Vainka, and consult.'

The upshot of the consultation was that the *ooriadnik*, the district policeman, sallied forth at dusk that very evening. With him were four stout peasants, armed with bludgeons. They went straight to the mansion of the manor-lord, to whom they made a certain communication. An hour or two later the Eagle met his two friends, entirely unconscious, even unsuspicious, of the fact that they had betrayed him. Together the three youths set out, creeping silently and with caution, for the mansion. They went first to the stables, where they collected many armfuls of dry straw, which they piled at various points close against the walls of the house. When this had been accomplished, Mark bade them follow him. 'We shall enter by the kitchen window at the back; it is easily opened,' he said. 'I examined it one day when the Starost sent me up with cream for the family.'

The window was easily opened, and the conspirators climbed in. Each was armed with a heavy stick. Said the Eagle, 'We shall wake them one by one as we find them. No alarm must be given. Follow me.'

Vainka and Colka followed. As the three began to mount the stairs, however, four men pounced upon Mark from a recess, and bore him down in a moment. He called for assistance to his companions, but his appeal met with no response. Vainka and Colka had, in fact, disappeared at the right moment. Mark made a furious resistance, but was, of course, easily overpowered. What could one lad do against four men? He was quickly carried to the village lock-up, stiff and sore from many hard knocks, and there securely shut in for the night.

When, a few days later, he was tried by a rural judge and his assistants, Mark found, to his rage and mortification, that Colka and Vainka, with others of his former associates, were the principal witnesses against him. This discovery nearly broke his heart, and he had not a word to say in his own defence. Poor Mark, who, of course, really deserved condemnation, was convicted and sentenced. He was sent to St. Petersburg, and presently, when the arrangements were completed for the dispatch of a gang of convicts to Siberia, the Eagle—an eagle no longer, but a poor, draggled, dejected, spiritless fowl at best—found himself one of an unfortunate group bound for some unknown destination beyond the Urals.



"Mark was easily overpowered."

Had he known it, matters were steadily tending towards a great and happy climax, though certainly at this moment, as he took his place among the unfortunate people now undertaking the first stage of their long and miserable journey eastwards, things looked the reverse of promising. Mark had many dangers, many pains, many trials to undergo before that great and happy climax should be reached; but he was on his way towards it.

(*Continued on page* 78.)

'THE EPIC OF THE LION.'

A French Fable.

IN a magnificent poem, Victor Hugo has told a pretty fable of a lion. A lion, dwelling alone in a forest, had carried off to his den a king's son, without harming the child. The king and all his court were in great distress. They called for volunteers who would beard the lion in his den, and release the poor little prince, who was only about two or three years old. A band of brave men undertook the perilous errand, and one valiant knight in armour, with drawn sword, actually entered the lion's abode. Alas! in the combat which ensued, the knight was overcome, slain, and partly eaten! The lion, having thus demolished his foe, retired again to repose, with the baby prince still beside him.

The king then equipped a company of archers and spearmen, whom he sent forth to lay siege to the lion. As these men approached the lair, they saw crouching in the gloom a majestic figure, at which they aimed a shower of arrows and spears. The wounded beast rose to his feet, shook the weapons off, and, with a thunderous roar, rushed out upon the soldiers. The men ran away, and again the lion was left in peace.

He it was who made the next move in the game. Posting himself on a hill near the royal city, he roared forth a message to the king.

'Tell his Majesty,' said the lion, 'that he has worn out my patience. I did not mean to hurt his pretty boy, but now I will do so! These insults and attacks are intolerable, and I will have my revenge. Look out for me to-morrow! I will then enter your city with the child alive in my mouth. I shall take him to the principal room of the palace, and there will I devour him!'

That was a night of terror in the royal city. The next morning there was not a single person in the streets. Every door was closed. Every one was in hiding. The king was sheltering himself and his family in the citadel.

The lion was as good as his word. Down the main street he stalked, tenderly bearing the little prince in his tremendous jaws. He was disgusted with the cowardice of mankind. Several times he laid his burden gently on the ground, that he might relieve his feelings in an indignant roar.

Presently the lion came to the deserted palace. He ascended the marble staircase, he paced through the quiet corridors and beautiful rooms, looking for a comfortable nook in which to eat up the prince.

But the palace was not quite empty. As the lion pushed open a door, he caught sight of a tiny girl, sitting up in her bed and playing with her toys.

This was the prince's baby sister, whom the whole household, in their cowardly haste to be gone, had entirely forgotten! Her little pink arms and legs peeped out from her dainty white night-dress; her face was like a flower. She was singing with a voice—says the poet—softer than a silver lute-string.

The lion stopped short. Then he entered the room, making the joists creak as he did so. Straight to the bed he went, still carrying the prince in his terrible mouth.

Was the baby girl frightened? Not a bit of it!

'Brother! brother!' she cried.

Then she looked at the lion. What a big head he had, and what yellow eyes! The child stood up in her cot, and shook her little pink fist in the lion's face!

The lion put the prince down at her feet, on the pretty white bed—all silk and lace. No mother could have been gentler.

'Do not be frightened, my dear,' said the lion; 'there he is!'

FROM THE CITIES OF ITALY.

III.—ON THE HILL ABOVE FLORENCE.

THOUGH 'Immortal Rome' must take the first place as the greatest of the cities of Italy, there is another which may perhaps lay claim to being the best beloved, and we will turn to-day from the Queen of the Seven Hills to where 'Florence lies out on the mountain-side.' We will fancy it a May evening, when the air is fragrant with the scent of roses—roses climbing everywhere, tumbling over walls and roofs, and dividing fields and orchards with hedges of pink blossoms. We will cross the golden Arno by the old bridge, from which the jewellers can look out of the back windows of their little shops sheer down into the water. We will follow the cool back streets to where a flight of steps leads up the hill to the finest point of view you can well desire; and on the steps, where the cypresses stand like dark sentinels on guard, we will pause a moment and look back, and let Florence tell us her first story—an unusual story, too, for Florence is a place of fierce feuds and passionate strife, and tales of pity and forgiveness are few and far between, so that this one is all the more beautiful from its rarity.

Up this steep road one day, nine hundred or so years ago, came the young knight, Giovanni Gualberto, in the pride of his youth and strength, and with a fierce purpose in his heart. His only brother, Hugo, had fallen by the hand of a Florentine nobleman with whom he had quarrelled, and Giovanni had taken upon himself to hunt down the murderer and to avenge his brother's death. It was Good Friday, and perhaps the solemn memories of the day and the glowing beauty of the Italian spring unconsciously softened the young man's bitter thoughts as he climbed the steep hill-side on the way to his country home among the mountains. But suddenly, at a turn in the road, it seemed as if his anticipations had taken shape, for there, full in his path, there met him face to face the man he sought, unarmed and alone. For one moment the two faced each other, the murderer in his conscious guilt and helplessness, and the young avenger, with full power to carry out his purpose of destruction. Then the guilty man fell at Giovanni's feet, and, clasping his knees, entreated for mercy in the name of Him Who died on that day for the sinful world. There must have been a terrible struggle in the heart of the hot-blooded young Italian, with his hand on the hilt of his avenging blade and the agonised face of his foe looking up into his own. But that once, at least, in the fierce history of

Florence, 'kindness, nobler ever than revenge,' triumphed even over the customs of the blood-feud, and Giovanni Gualberto sheathed his sword and pardoned the slayer of his brother for the love of God. And the beautiful story goes on to tell how, as he knelt in the fair church which still crowns the hill, it seemed to him that the face of Him Who prayed for His murderers bent towards him in gracious approval of the mercy he had shown.

And now let us, too, climb the hill and look down upon the fair city beneath us, while the memories crowd so fast upon us that each roof and tower seems to be clamouring to tell its own story. There is the Cathedral dome, the 'little sister,' as they called it, of St. Peter's at Rome; and Santa Croce, where Michael Angelo lies and looks towards the dome that he loved; and, best of all, 'the startling bell-tower Giotto raised,' the marble that seems to take colour from the sky, that gleams in the moonlight and flushes with the setting sun almost like a snowy Alpine peak. And, as we look, we feel bound to honour the memory of one man, to whom we owe it that Florence still stands between the mountains and the river, a proud, turbulent man, who shed the blood of his fellow-citizens like water in his own party quarrel, but whom all lovers of Florence must yet honour to the end of time, Farinata degli Uberti.

His story comes before us as we look at that characteristic battlemented tower rising from the solid mass of masonry, the old Palace of the Signoria, or chief magistrates of Florence. In the belfry hung once the great bell, called in jest the Vacca, or Cow, and when that fierce cow lowed, there would be wild work in the city by the Arno. The very form of the Palace reminds us for ever of the days in which it was built, when Florence was torn asunder by the strife between the two factions — the Guelfs, who were generally the popular party, and the Ghibellines, the old nobility. For the Palace stands crookedly, and at the side, not in the middle of the square, only because the Guelfs, who were in power when the building began, sternly forbade the architect to use any ground occupied by the 'nest of traitors,' the demolished palaces of the other faction. The lower battlements of the tower, too, are of the square fashion approved by the Guelfs; but before the building was finished their day of power was over, and it was the Ghibellines who added the pointed battlements at the top.

Farinata degli Uberti was a Ghibelline, a stern, haughty noble, holding all who opposed him in great despite. In the year 1260, he and the other chief men of his party were in banishment at Siena. This was the usual state of Florentine affairs during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries: one party triumphant for the time being within the city, the other party in exile scheming and struggling to get back to the place which, in their strange way, they all loved so passionately. The Guelfs in Florence declared war against Siena for harbouring the exiles, and the Sienese, reinforced by a band of German knights, sent to their aid by Manfred, King of Sicily, met them at Montaperti, near the river Arbice. The Florentine army felt confident of victory, for had not messengers from Siena brought secret intelligence of disaffection in the city, and of a plot to open the gates to the attacking force? As a matter of fact, this intelligence had been manufactured by Farinata and his companions, who were in communication with certain of their friends and well-wishers among the Florentine host, and who hoped, by such false promises, to lure his enemies on to their destruction. Farinata evidently had some doubts as to the staunchness of his Sienese friends, for he suppressed a report which he had received of the numbers and strength of the Guelfs and their allies. The attack, he urged, should be made at once; the Florentines were ill-led and disorderly, and would make no stand, and to his fellow-exiles he added, sternly: 'Unless we fight now, while we have the Germans with us, we shall never return to Florence. Better death and defeat for us now than to crawl about the world any longer.'

For, to Farinata, the world outside Florence was no world at all, and he meant to set his whole future upon that one day's desperate struggle.

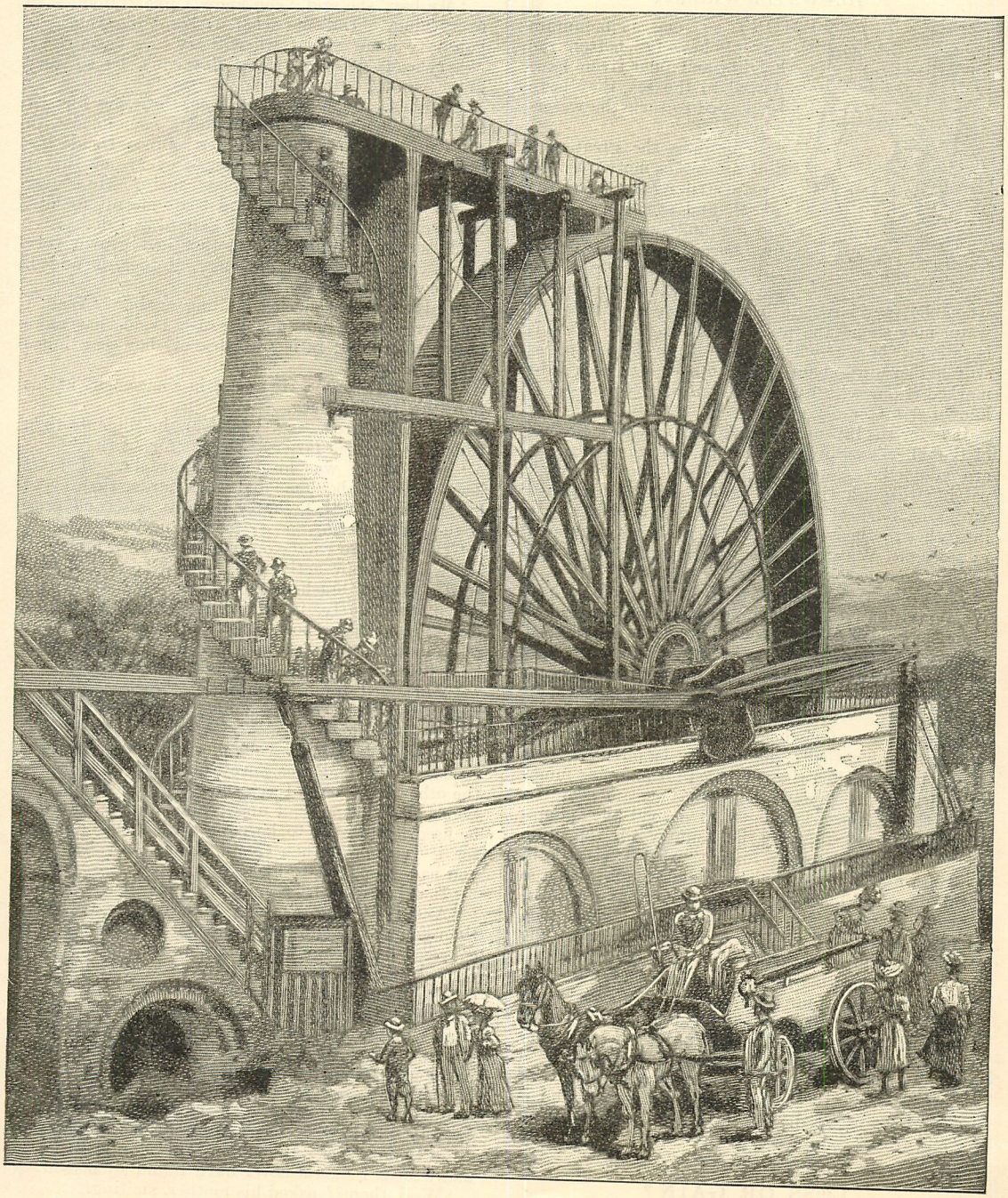
So, in the blazing heat of a September day, the armies joined battle, and through the long bright hours the conflict lasted, until night closed over the wreck of the Florentine army. The few Ghibellines who, being of lower rank or less importance, had escaped banishment, deserted to the enemy, two thousand five hundred of the Florentine host were dead on the field, fifteen hundred were prisoners, there was no house in the city but mourned for one slain or taken, and the day of Montaperti, when the Arbice ran red and the wail of Florence for her slain went up to heaven, was a bitter memory for many a year to come.

The Guelfs in the city fled to Lucca, and the victorious party held a council at Empoli, with a view to forming a league, which should unite all the Ghibellines throughout Tuscany. Then it was that the suggestion was made, prompted, perhaps, by some jealous neighbouring city, that Florence, where the Guelfs had always been powerful, should be destroyed and reduced to open villages, that it might never again form a stronghold for the faction. But, while envious allies and unworthy Florentines considered the proposal, Farinata, the great Ghibelline, rose up fierce and stern before the council. 'I alone, with open face, defended her,' are the proud words put into his mouth by Dante, the other great exile, who, differing from Farinata on most points, yet loved him because he had loved Florence so well. Single-handed, if need be, he would champion the city, he said; while he had breath left in his body, or power to wield his sword, he would guard Florence from destruction. His burning words turned the scale, his own friends rallied to their allegiance, and the disgraceful project was abandoned and never again renewed.

We shall hardly call Farinata a patriot in the noblest sense of the word, a man who puts the good of his country before a party and personal quarrel, yet, as we look down upon the city which he saved, we feel like the old chronicler who bids us 'keep in noble memory' the name of the man who stood alone as her champion and 'with open face defended her' in the hour of her greatest peril.

MARY H. DEBENHAM.

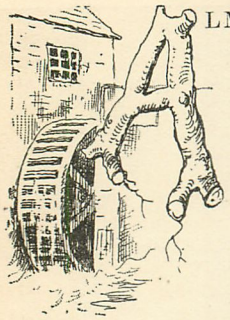
"The guilty man fell at Giovanni's feet."



The Great Water-wheel at Laxey, Isle of Man.

LITTLE GIANTS OF LABOUR.

III.—WATER-WHEELS.



ALMOST as long as mountain torrents have fallen from the heights, and quiet rivers have flowed to the sea, they have been used to turn the water-wheel.

Sometimes the great paddles are set in motion by the stream striking the top of the wheel, and sometimes by it flowing underneath. In the first case they are called 'overshot' wheels; in the second, 'undershot.' If the wheel be very large, it is often so placed that the water may strike the paddles half-way up. *Then* it is called a 'breast' wheel, while if the stream strikes still higher up—about where ten o'clock would be marked if our wheel were the dial of a watch—it is known as a 'ten o'clock' wheel.

It is for the inventor to find out how to make use of the wheel's willingness to turn, and various means are adopted. Generally, the axle of the wheel, passing through the wall of the mill, is furnished with a gear-wheel at its farther end, which, fitting into other toothed wheels, sets the grinding machinery in motion. We will speak with more detail of this when we come to windmills.

The great engineer, James Watt, invented a wheel which did its work from its outside edge instead of from the centre, being fitted all round with a toothed ring (as the South Kensington model shows). This, of course, drove the machinery at a greater speed, but was not so powerful as when working through the axle.

Sometimes water-wheels are situated a very long way from the actual scene of their labours. This is often the case when they are used for pumping mines or quarries. If there be no strong stream near the mine, the engineer is obliged to extend the 'pump-handle,' so to speak, over the country till the place for a water-wheel can be found. Near Tavistock, in Devonshire, there is such a 'handle,' made in the form of connecting-rods resting on rollers, for a distance of nearly half a mile. The water-wheel (one hundred and twenty feet round it) is driven by the river Tamar. A crank, fixed to its axle, drags the half-mile connecting-rods backwards and forwards, for a distance of four feet, and as it is *always* working, the mine is kept free from water.

According to the labour required the wheels vary in size, the largest yet made being at the Laxey Lead Mines in the Isle of Man. It is two hundred and seventeen feet six inches in circumference, and is mainly built of wood. Its duties are to pump water for and from the mines.

LOSS OR GAIN?

FOR two or three days Fred's usually bright face had been very cloudy, and not even his little sister's winning ways had succeeded in lighting a smile in his eyes. He answered all questions gruffly, if not rudely, and, at last, his mother thought it time to interfere.

'My boy,' she said, 'you know I like frankness in everything. Tell me what is troubling you. If you have done wrong, we will try to set you right. Worry caused by anything else can't be so very grave, can it?'

Fred hesitated a moment, then, throwing himself down on a chair near his mother's, exclaimed with a frown, 'It's just this, Mother. Since Dodds has come to school, it's quite clear to every one that I shall never be head of the class again. He is ever so much cleverer than I, and beats me all to bits. And yet he doesn't work half so hard as I do.'

He stopped, seeing his mother had grown very grave. 'Of course, you are sorry, Mother,' he added. 'I knew you would be.'

'Did you?' asked she, smiling again. 'Well, I am sorry, dear; but not because Dodds has more brains than you; rather because my boy sees things in a false light.'

'How, Mother?' He stared in amazement at his mother's smiling face.

'Tell me, Fred, are you less intelligent than before? Are you lazier?—less fit for work?'

'No, indeed,' was his emphatic reply. 'I must keep my wits about me and work harder than ever; but, in spite of all, I shall only have a second prize at the end of term.'

'Then *you* are what you were before? Your brain is as clear, your activity as great, your heart as good?' Fred blushed. 'I know, my boy,' added his mother softly, 'you had not felt envy before, but it must have been latent in your heart. So really you have lost nothing and have gained a little knowledge of yourself—thanks to Dodds.'

'You liked my being head of the class, Mother,' murmured Fred, confused at the unexpected turn things had taken.

'Yes, Fred; I knew your powers and wanted you to use them, and was sure you ought to be above the other boys. Yet I say you have gained, not lost. Some small quantity of unexpended energy may still be used. Try still to keep up with Dodds; if you see it is useless, then thank Heaven, my boy, that you have some one to look up to.'

'It is horrid to be second,' Fred insisted.

'And is it a good thing to have nobody better than yourself to admire?' retorted his mother. 'Of course, I know you have many grown-up people to respect, but are you so admirable that you do not care to have a companion better than yourself? I know you're a nice boy, Fred,' added she, laughing; 'but I think the school will be none the worse for having a still finer head. I think you have lost nothing but your temper. Recover that, and I shall be quite pleased.'

Fred was silent for a moment, then observed gravely, 'I am what I was before, that's quite true. And Dodds is a rare chum. He has given me so many ideas I should never have found by myself.'

'Well, then?' asked his mother, smiling.

'Well,' he said, bashfully, 'I am *better*, perhaps, than I was before. I have gained, not lost.'

He was rather a big boy, but he returned his mother's loving kiss gladly. 'Think of doing the

best you can, my boy,' said she tenderly, 'not better than another. And for your motto this year take the words of an old philosopher, Plato, "Envy is excluded from the heavenly choir."'

PUZZLERS FOR WISE HEADS.

3.—Zig-zag Puzzle.

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. . × .
. . . ×
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× . . .
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. . . ×
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× . . .

Replace the crosses and dots in the above figure with letters which, read from left to right, form words meaning—

1. A domestic servant.
2. To convey by water.
3. A young female.
4. A New Zealand bird.
5. The clenched hand.
6. To obstruct.
7. A barren waste.
8. A large cistern.
9. A sloping table for writing upon.
10. Not present.
11. Sharp to the taste.
12. High in price.
13. Not difficult.

The letters replacing the crosses in the figure will then, read downwards, spell out something dear to the hearts of all children. R. M. B.

[*Answer on page* 107.]

Answer to Puzzle on Page 35.

2.—East; West; North; South.

RAINING TREES.

SOMETIMES on a winter's morning we go out after there has been a rime frost, which has coated the trees with sparkling icicles; the sun shines forth, and brings down the frost as it melts in a shower of drops. Even in summer, when there has been a heavy dew on a cool night, this falls later like a fine spray of rain. But there are countries that have little rain and much warmth; yet these countries have trees which seem to gather moisture when the sun has set, to distribute it upon the thirsty land during the next day. Some kinds of trees attract more moisture than others, and these have been called rain-trees. The dry plains of parts of South America are said to be refreshed by the drippings from an acacia-tree.

Occasionally moisture falls which is caused by insects; travellers have seen a species of cicada, or grasshopper, swarming upon young shoots in hot countries, and squirting out juice as they fed. Here in England we see now and then the honey-dew that is given forth by the green 'blight' known as aphis.

RUNNYMEDE.

June 15th, 1215.

OVER the royal town of Windsor, the summer sun was shining. A fairer June day had never gladdened the green fields of England. But the King was not in his castle; the noble was not in his own domain; and the humble peasant who toiled on the land had his thoughts elsewhere. For happy content and loyal regard were not, that day, at home in the hearts of Englishmen. The cloud of civil war had for long been rolling up from the horizon. The sulky tyrant, John, who wore the crown, had oppressed his subjects beyond their endurance, and the wave of wrath which his actions caused was now rolling back to overwhelm him.

In a pleasant field on the banks of old Thames, between Windsor and Staines, the sun looked down on a strange scene. No cattle peacefully grazing the fragrant turf, no gentle breezes nodding the silver daisies, but a vast concourse of armoured men, their plumes and banners waving in the summer wind, which shook the velvet curtain of the royal pavilion, in front of which they stood in warlike ranks. The barons and clergy of England had come to force King John to rule his subjects more justly.

To the king who sat in that pavilion, ready at last to grant the wishes which he had not power to refuse, the sound of the passing breeze seemed like the voice of his angry people.

Accompanied by a few chosen nobles, Stephen Langton, the Archbishop of Canterbury, laid their demands before the king. And it was a happy moment for England when that weak yet powerful hand affixed the royal seal to the great Charter, granting better liberty to the vassal and a nobler strength to the baron.

Surely we owe a debt of gratitude to that courageous band who defeated the tyrant's will, yet preserved respect for the throne which he had filled so unworthily.

A SPRING MORNING.

HERE quiet fields in beauty lie,
And flowers unclose beneath the sky;
Beside the gentle river's brink
The peaceful cattle graze and drink,
And o'er the heaven's serenest blue
Float softest clouds of lovely hue.

How sweet to dwell in scenes like this,
Where everything but breathes of peace!
No harsh, unlovely sound is heard,
But low of cattle, call of bird.
How far removed the city's din,
The town with all its strife and sin!

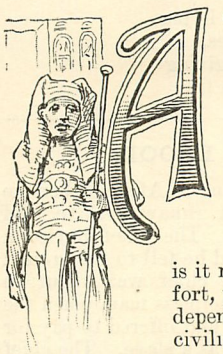
Dear scenes where day by day I stray,
Sweet flowers that blossom by the way;
How oft my heart shall wander back,
Revisiting each well-loved track:
The hills, the fields where once I strayed,
Where sun played hide-and-seek with shade.

I'll hear the winds that softly blow,
I'll see the golden cowslips grow;

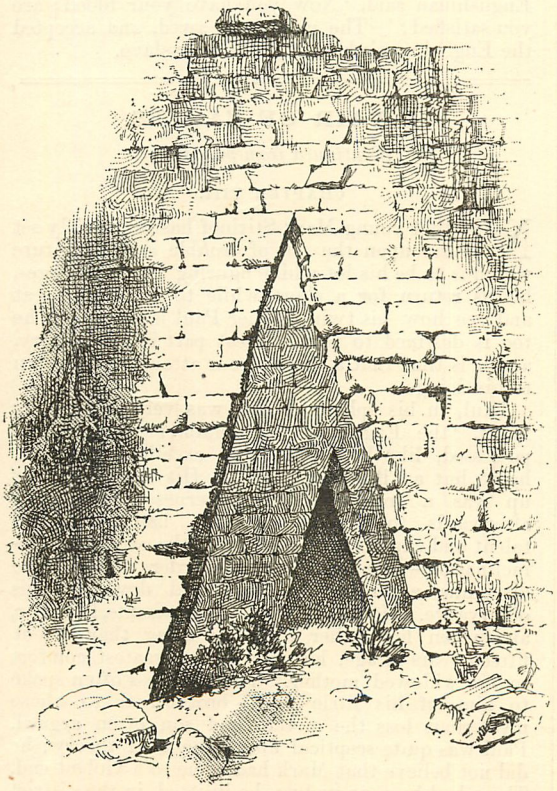
With heart unspoiled, 'mid scenes so wild,
I'll live and play once more a child,
And bless with every passing year
The fields so fresh, so sweet, so dear.

DOORS, LOCKS, AND KEYS.

II.—EARLY GREEK DOORS AND STONE DOORS OF MOAB AND BASHAN.



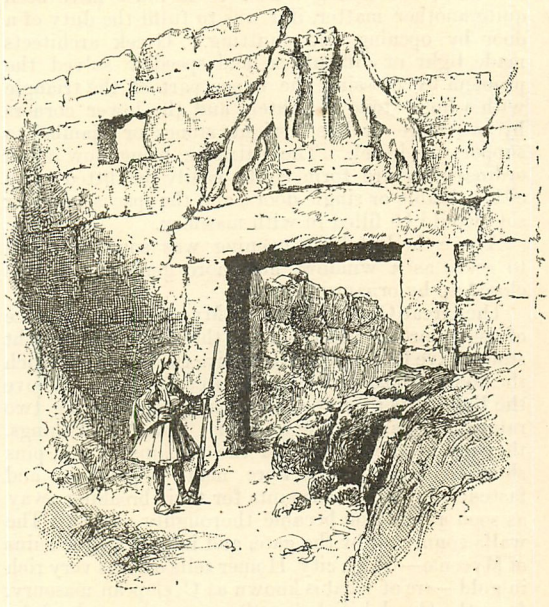
A CURIOUS fact it is, that the things we know best, see most often, and make use of from day to day, are often the objects which we insensibly ignore. For instance, I cannot recall ever hearing any one talk of a door, excepting a house-painter, a joiner, or maybe an enthusiastic wood-carver, and yet is it not true that much of the comfort, peace, and security of our lives depend on this slighted product of civilisation? If our memories will carry us back to infancy, probably one of the first things we were ever asked to do for any one was to 'shut the door;' or if we have at



Triangular Door at Missolonghi.

any time instructed a dog to do 'parlour tricks,' did we not usually start his education by putting a lump of sugar on the door, and doing our best to make the animal comprehend that by closing it the coveted dainty would become his own?

Warmth and quiet depends largely on a door, as well as safety from marauding visitors, whether with



Lion Gate, Mycenæ.

two legs or four; in fact, our friendly protector shuts in what is good, and shuts out what is bad.

The idea of blocking the entrance to a cave-dwelling with a piece of stone or wood must have

Moabite Stone Doors.

occurred to some one at a very early period of the world's history, but the first actual doorways closed by definite doors appear to have been of triangular

form, like the one from Missolonghi in Greece. This doorway was particularly strong and easy of construction, but fitting a door to it must have been quite another matter, if it was to fulfil the duty of a door by opening and shutting. Greek architects made light of difficulties, and speedily solved the problem by crossing the upper part of the triangle with a huge stone or 'lintel,' and the lower corners by two more or less upright stones or 'jambs' to support the lintel. The entrance being now of an ordinary square form could easily be fitted with either double or single doors, and the spaces on either side would be filled in with masonry.

Above the lintel the opening was sometimes left to serve as a window, but more generally it was closed up by ornamental work.

The Great Gate of Lions at Mycenæ is an instance of these portals, and the lintel, threshold, and upright stones have holes drilled to receive the pivots on which the doors turned, as well as the securing bolts. Above the lintel was a piece of sculpture representing two rampant lions guarding an altar. Alas! poor things, they are headless now, and the remains of iron pins show that the heads were made separately and fastened on, which accounts for their breaking away as soon as the iron became thoroughly rusted. The walls connected by the gate, and indeed, all the ruins of Mycenæ—which city, Homer tells us, was very rich in gold—are of what is known as Cyclopean masonry, from the Greek belief that they were the work of the Cyclops of mythology. This masonry consists of enormous blocks of stone sometimes hewn so as to fit closely one to another; sometimes more loosely put together, and filled in with rubble and small stones.

In the ancient lands of Moab and Bashan, of which we read in the Old Testament, stone was always used for doors, and this accounts for their survival; as in other countries, whilst the doorways exist, the actual doors have long since perished.

Stone was plentiful in Moab and the adjoining countries, and in the warlike days of their prosperity, when all possible defences were needed, doors which have kept perfectly sound for some three thousand years must have been invaluable to their owners. In some cases they consist of a mere plain slab, but in many others, whether single or double, they are ornamented with panels and carving, showing extraordinary ingenuity, considering the tools then available for cutting or carving.

These huge solid doors presented great difficulties in the way of hanging and turning. Hinges were unknown until two thousand years later; however, some one invented the plan of leaving a projecting bit of stone on the door above and below, shaped so as to fit holes in both threshold and lintel, by means of which the door swung easily. This plan of door-hanging was afterwards introduced into Europe, probably by the Moors, and lasted until the fourteenth century.

HELENA HEATH.

SERVICE.

TO-DAY you wrote a letter
To one who calls you friend;
Is any man the better
For words which you have penned?

Is any home the brighter
Because you passed that way?
Is any heart the lighter
That you have lived to-day?

Life is not worth the living,
As it so quickly flies,
Unless we're always giving
The best that in us lies.

GIVING HIS BLOOD.

AN Englishman was travelling in Africa, when he met a chief pursuing a runaway slave, and determined to have his life. The chief hurled a javelin and struck the man, and he fell to the ground wounded and bleeding. The chief was about to strike the death-blow at the helpless man, when the Englishman hastened forward and offered to pay for the man's offence, or buy him as a slave. The chief answered, 'No, I must have blood,' and he hurled the javelin again, but the Englishman caught it on the arm. As the blood spurted from the wound, the Englishman said, 'Now you have your blood; are you satisfied?' The chief was awed, and accepted the Englishman's blood for the poor slave.

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 69.)

CHAPTER VIII.

NOW that young Mark Stirinof has been fairly set afloat upon the sea of trouble and adventure which is to be his lot while figuring in these pages, let us return for a short while to the family seat and see how his twin brother Paul is faring, for he too is destined to play a great part in this history, and it is time that a share of our attention be given to his doings.

Paul, in his sphere of life, was very like young Mark, 'the Eagle,' in *his* humbler walk. Paul possessed, like his brother, an excellent, generous heart, but an intolerant spirit. His early bringing up was a trouble to his governesses, first, and afterwards to his tutors. He had plenty of talent and capacity for work, but the strongest disinclination—like Mark—to obey orders and preserve discipline according to laws laid down for his observance. He was devoted to his parents, however, and when his father died, he being then about fifteen years of age, he proved the greatest comfort to his widowed mother. The Countess often spoke to him of his little twin-brother, as to whose mysterious loss the mother and son often argued. Paul was quite sceptical about the wolf theory; he did not believe that Mark had come to a violent end. There had been no wolves, he insisted, in the district so long as could be remembered. Peter, the keeper, had seen none. Probably the nurses lost him, and being afraid to own up to it had invented a cock-and-bull story to account for his disappearance.

'I think Peter believes so also,' Paul would say, 'though he won't say so outright. Mind you, Mark is dead, of course; I have not the slightest hope

that he is alive—we should have heard of him if he had lived; but I don't believe in the wolves. More likely he fell into a pool or a pit, poor little chap!'

But the Countess never succeeded in getting a definite opinion out of the keeper. Peter disliked the subject. The recollection of the little Count's loss seemed to be very painful to him, and the Countess liked the man all the better for his devotion to the memory of her lost little one. Peter was, moreover, entirely devoted, body and soul, to the 'young master.' He really loved the Count Paul, and was ready at any moment to do anything in the world for him. Paul, educated in England, and spending only the summer holidays at the estate in Russia, had the strongest taste for all forms of sport; he therefore saw much of the keeper, and perhaps, in his own way, he grew as fond of the faithful henchman as Peter was of him.

But though educated in England, Paul—now Count Stirinof, a noble of the Russian Empire—was obliged to look forward to a career in the Russian service. He did not like the prospect; indeed, he did his best to persuade those who had a voice in the matter to allow him to renounce his Russian nationality altogether, in order that he might spend his days in England, as an English country gentleman, or possibly as a soldier or sailor in the service of King Edward. But his Russian relations, persons of high standing in the Empire, succeeded in persuading his mother that such a thing would not do at all. Indeed, the question was actually put to the Tsar himself, who would not hear of it.

So Paul found himself at sixteen years a member of the 'Page Corps,' in training for the life of a courtier, or possibly of an officer in one of the aristocratic regiments, such as the Red Hussars, or the 'Gardes à cheval.'

Paul liked some of his companions in the corps well enough, but on the whole he did not at all approve of the life he now led. There was too much 'cocked-hat tom-foolery' as he told his mother, with whom he invariably spoke English; too much discipline, too much 'side,' and too little sport—no cricket or football, no hockey, tennis, golf, or anything else. Paul was not happy.

With regret, too, I am obliged to put upon record that young Count Stirinof did not behave very well. He taught his Russian companions to be impertinent to their masters, and to kick against authority generally. His independent spirit was constantly asserting itself, just as Mark's had asserted itself down in his village, a hundred or more miles away; and, as in Mark's case, that same spirit of intolerance and independence eventually got him into serious trouble.

Matters in Russia were in an uncomfortable state. There were rumours of war with Japan; there were the beginnings of agitations among the working population and the students of St. Petersburg, all of whom were discontented with their lot, and anxious for such changes in the laws as would make life more tolerable for poor folk, who find it very difficult, in Russia, to carry on existence on any footing much better than that of a dog's life.

One day a fellow 'page' showed Paul a leaflet which had somehow been smuggled into the 'Lyceum,' as their aristocratic establishment is called.

'Those idiots of students are going to have a "demonstration,"' he laughed. 'Look here, I picked up this paper in the yard—how it got there goodness knows—read it, Paul!'

Paul read it. 'I don't see why they are fools, poor chaps!' he said. 'They are poor, many of them starving, and can't exist in decent comfort; they have a host of grievances which require redress, the Ministers won't do anything for them, therefore they are going to have a procession—I don't see that they are fools for that. What else can the wretched fellows do?'

'Nonsense! styes are the proper places for pigs, and kennels for dogs; what do they want better?'

'But they are neither pigs nor dogs; they are students of the University, men of intellect, and only in that respect differing from yourself.'

'Oh, come, Paul, you're rude,' laughed the other, young Prince Dombofsky. 'If you sympathise with them so much, why don't you join their procession?'

'I am going to,' said Paul, unexpectedly.

Dombofsky stared a moment, then burst out laughing.

'You would not be such a fool,' he said. 'What *you*, an aristocrat, be seen marching—in uniform I suppose—with these dirty, starved, ragged chaps? I will give you ten pounds if you do.'

'I don't want your money,' said Paul, quietly, 'but I shall do it.'

'No, don't, man,' said Dombofsky, more seriously; 'you would get into a fearful row. Our whole establishment would suffer. For goodness' sake don't do anything so rash!'

Dombofsky now looked so serious and so alarmed that Paul laughed aloud.

'But, my dear fellow, I sympathise most heartily with these poor students,' he repeated. 'I particularly wish to show them that there are at least some of the aristocrats who have a fellow-feeling for students of less bumptious establishments. I consider it patriotic to do so. As for the Lyceum, if I get into a scrape, I shall leave the corps altogether. I don't like it, as you know, and if they expel me, so much the better.'

Dombofsky shook his head and looked grave.

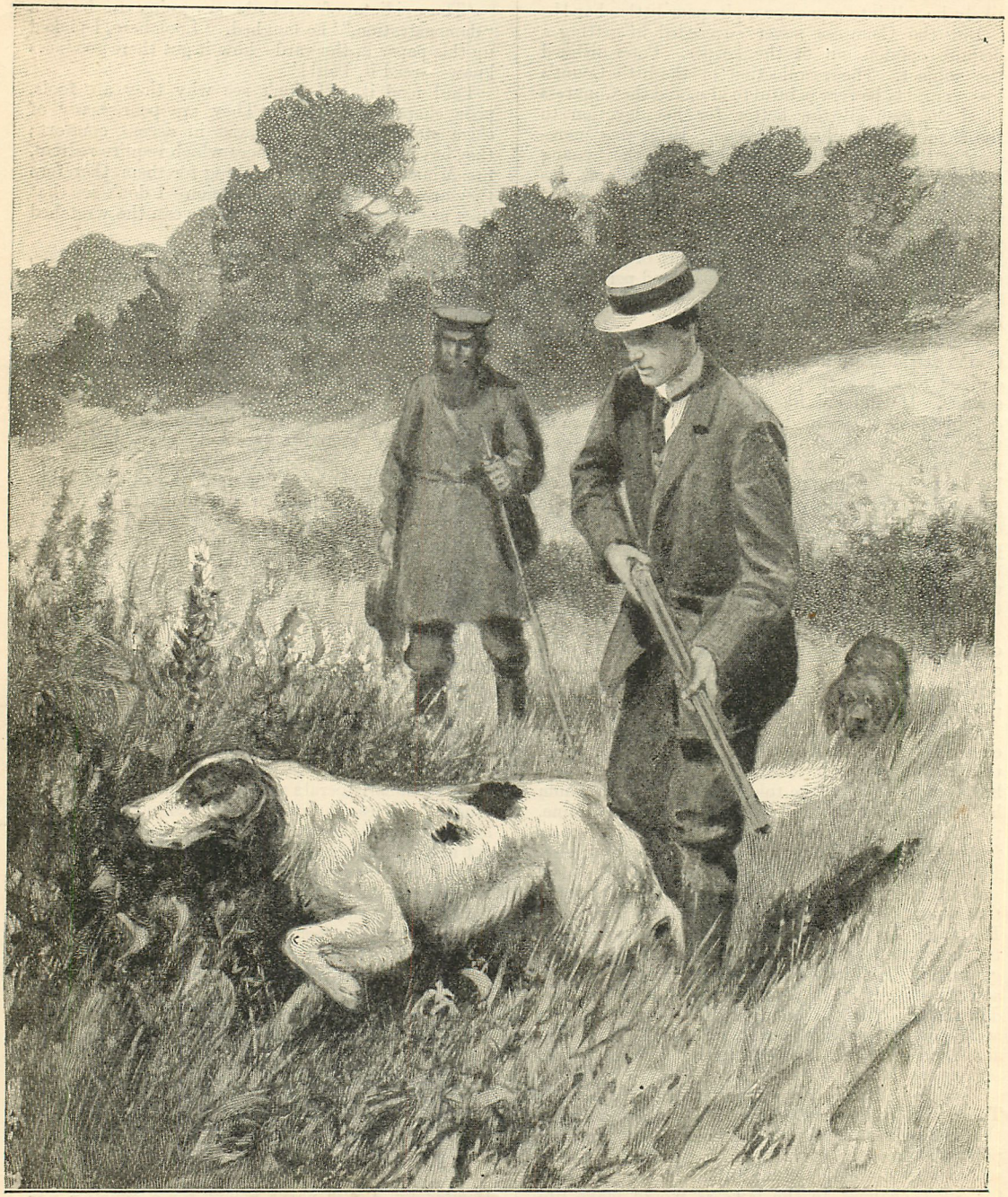
'They may do more than expel you,' he said. 'I warn you it is a dangerous game. The students will be arrested and you with them. The authorities won't allow demonstrations.'

'All right, let them arrest me. They can't punish a fellow very severely for walking with others in a procession.'

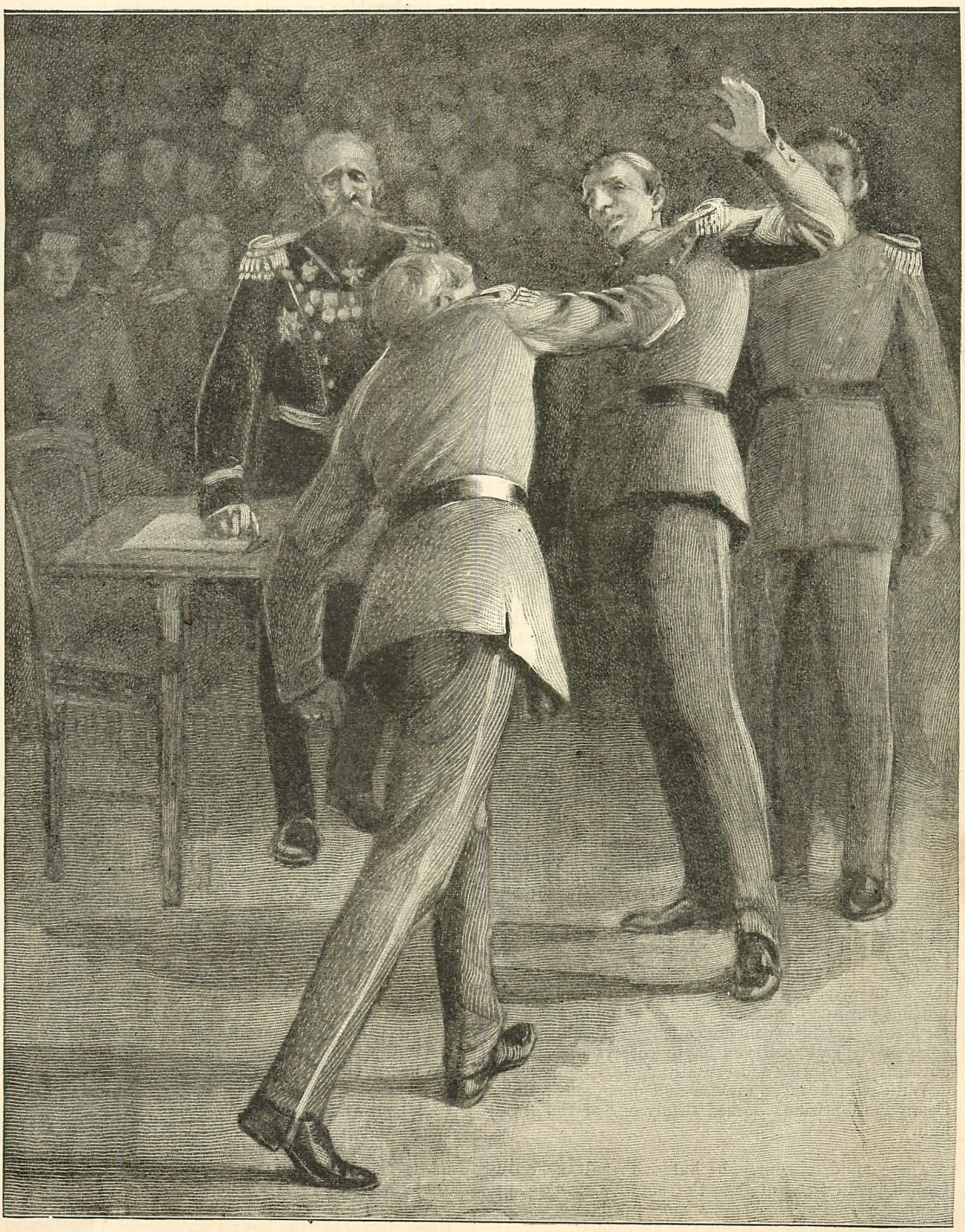
'They both can and will. As for you, in your Page Corps uniform—why, even the Tsar himself might hear of it, and then—well, if your career were ruined, and no more harm done, you would have got off cheaply!'

Paul laughed. 'My career ruined! My good Dombofsky, I was never meant for a courtier, nor for a captain of the Court Gardes. If only they would kick me out of the Lyceum I should be thankful indeed. I shall certainly walk with the students.'

(*Continued on page* 82.)



"Paul had the strongest taste for all forms of sport."



"Paul smote him in the chest."

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 79.)

WITH Paul, as with Mark, a resolution once taken was quickly acted upon. Paul not only took 'French leave' to quit the Lyceum on the day of the students' demonstration, but, to the delight of many of the humbler students, who were gratified to see an aristocrat from the Lyceum among their ranks, he wore his uniform as 'page' of the Imperial Court, and was duly arrested, with a score or so of students, at the head of the procession.

Many of these were released, for the demonstration was peaceful, and the authorities could find no serious charge to bring against the arrested lads. But Paul was handed over to the Director of the Lyceum to be dealt with by that haughty and austere personage, a General and aide-de-camp to his Majesty, and a man whose patrician heart beat under a breast covered thickly with medals. Before this official Paul was brought, angry and offended, because his captors had behaved offensively towards him, as he considered, and as doubtless was the case; for the Russian official is often a most intolerant being, and a bully from the top of his head to the bottom of his sole.

The Director called Paul up in front of the whole Page Corps, assembled to witness his condemnation. He made a long speech upon the disgrace which Count Stirinof had brought upon the corps, and ended by dismissing him from the Lyceum. 'The two senior students will now remove the epaulettes of Count Stirinof,' he ended. 'Stand forward, Galitsin and Gagarin.'

Now Paul had grown more and more angry as the speech had proceeded, and by this time he was boiling over with a perfect frenzy of indignation, for the Director's words had been brutally insulting.

'I shall permit no one to lay a finger upon me, Excellency,' he now said, sufficiently loudly for all to hear. 'Stand back, Gagarin, and you, Galitsin.'

The pages named advanced, however, for they dared not disobey the Director. Gagarin raised his hand somewhat anxiously, in order to carry out his orders. Paul promptly smote him in the chest, so violently that he fell back among his horrified companions.

'I shall treat any one who offers to touch me in the same way, Mr. Director,' said Paul haughtily, moving towards the door. 'I now quit the Lyceum for ever. I salute your Excellency; I salute you, companions, and wish you happy careers under this autocracy of caprice and brutality.'

With which most unwise and dangerous words Count Paul Stirinof walked firmly out of the great hall.

There could, of course, be but one result of Paul's foolish conduct at the Page Corps. The rash young Count repaired at once to his mother's house, where he informed Countess Stirinof of his exploit.

His mother was terribly overcome by the news.

'You little know what you have done and said, Paul!' she sobbed. 'Your conduct will be found unpardonable; not only have you cast a slur upon the establishment itself, but you have used words which will personally offend the Tsar.'

Paul was not in the humour to care a brass button for the Tsar or any other living soul, except his mother, whom he loved tenderly; and even his consideration for her was at this moment somewhat lost in the bitter indignation caused by his treatment at the Page Corps.

'I would do and say the same again, Mother. What, would you have me submit tamely to the indignity of having my epaulettes torn from my shoulders? Are we slaves to the Tsar? Not I, for one. You are English, Mother; surely you would not have me behave otherwise?'

'Not in principle, perhaps, my son, but you spoke most indiscreetly: "An autocracy of caprice and brutality!" These are words the Tsar will never forgive, if they are reported to him. Go back, my son, to the Director; tell him you spoke in haste—in anger—in a moment of excitement.'

Paul laughed scornfully.

'Go back and apologise! *I!*' he exclaimed. 'Not even to please you, Mother. I wonder at your suggesting such a thing! Let the Tsar do what he pleases. As for the Director, if I see him again I will snap my fingers in his face.'

'Then I will go,' said the distracted Countess.

Paul paced the room, deep in thought. His mother was very dear to him. At the same time, the idea of her paying a visit to the Director and pleading, as it were, for forgiveness for a matter which he did not at present in the least regret, but rather gloried in, was very bitter to him.

'What do you suppose, then, that they could or would do to me?' he asked presently.

'My dear, you know what a miserable state of mind the Tsar is in,' replied the Countess. 'He has so much to worry him; they say he is at present scarcely master of his actions: the war that threatens in the East; the troubled condition of the peasantry; the strikes, the disaffection; Nihilistic activity. Heaven only knows how he would receive such words as you have spoken to-day—you who are the son of one of his most trusted, most faithful servants; you whose independence of spirit has for long been a source of grief both to the Director of the Page Corps and even, it is said, to his Majesty himself. Let me go, Paul, while there is time, and entreat the Director to pass over your offence for once, or if he cannot do this, at least to refrain from reporting your actual words.'

Paul paused in his walk.

'Pass over my offence!' he repeated disdainfully. 'What, and take me back, to be laughed at by every good little page-boy who dare not say "bo" to a goose? If I thought you could do such a thing, Mother, I would never come home again! I would go abroad and be an Englishman, and live under free laws as a man should; I would go to the Director and bid him not listen to a word that you have said; I would send the Tsar a new message, ten times worse than the last; I would——' Paul ended with a loud, boisterous laugh, which frightened the Countess and reduced her to tears.

(*Continued on page* 94.)

HEROES OF DUTY.

III.—THOMAS GRIFFIN.

THE workmen had taken their places at a large sugar-refinery at Battersea on the morning of April 12th, 1899. In the engineering section of the building there is an apartment called the hydraulic-room, containing machinery driven by water-power. Among others employed in this room was a young fitter's assistant named Thomas Griffin, the position he occupied being one of the humblest on the factory's staff of workmen. Yet on that morning he was to prove himself a hero.

Scarcely had the work begun when one of the engineers, making his way to an apartment adjoining that in which Griffin was employed, turned a tap to allow of the escape of some water. It was a matter of daily routine, but on this occasion he had scarcely performed the simple task when a loud explosion took place, and, in a cloud of hissing, rushing steam, he was driven from the room. The main steam-pipe of a large engine standing near had burst, and its contents poured forth with a deafening roar—a mist of scalding heat. The engine-room was filled with alarming swiftness, and the white cloud rolled on its way through the passages beyond.

The men in the hydraulic-room were in perfect safety, and, with one exception, remained there unhurt till the flood of steam was checked. But Thomas Griffin, after the momentary surprise had passed, called out that his mate was in danger, and, ere any one could prevent him, rushed into the steam-filled engine-room. He reached the fatal place where the explosion had occurred, only to be driven back, a dying man. A moment later his fellow-workmen in the adjoining apartment said that they saw some one reel against the wall of the passage and then stagger on to fall in the open yard beyond. They hurried out to him, and found him unconscious. He had been most terribly scalded on that short but awful journey. With tender care he was borne to a neighbouring hospital, but died almost immediately from shock and exhaustion.

In addition to the tablet which has been placed in remembrance of his devotion in the little cloister we have already described, there was a warm tribute paid at the time of his heroic deed by the coroner's jury who inquired into the cause of his death.

THE EGG-OVENS OF EGYPT.

THE world is full of marvels, if only we had eyes to see them and intelligence to understand them all. Some people think that those things only are wonderful which are of comparatively rare occurrence, such as destructive earthquakes or terrible accidents. Those who are more thoughtful, however, find that the commonest occurrences are really the most difficult to explain, and the most instructive when carefully studied. Try to think for a moment how the light and heat of the sun are produced day after day; or how it is that the trees all spring into leaf at a certain time of the year; or, again, how it is that *you* grow every week. These are things which we cannot fully understand. But we are always wiser and better for thinking about the common occurrences which we see around us, and more wisdom is to be got in this way than by saving all our thoughts for rare and striking events.

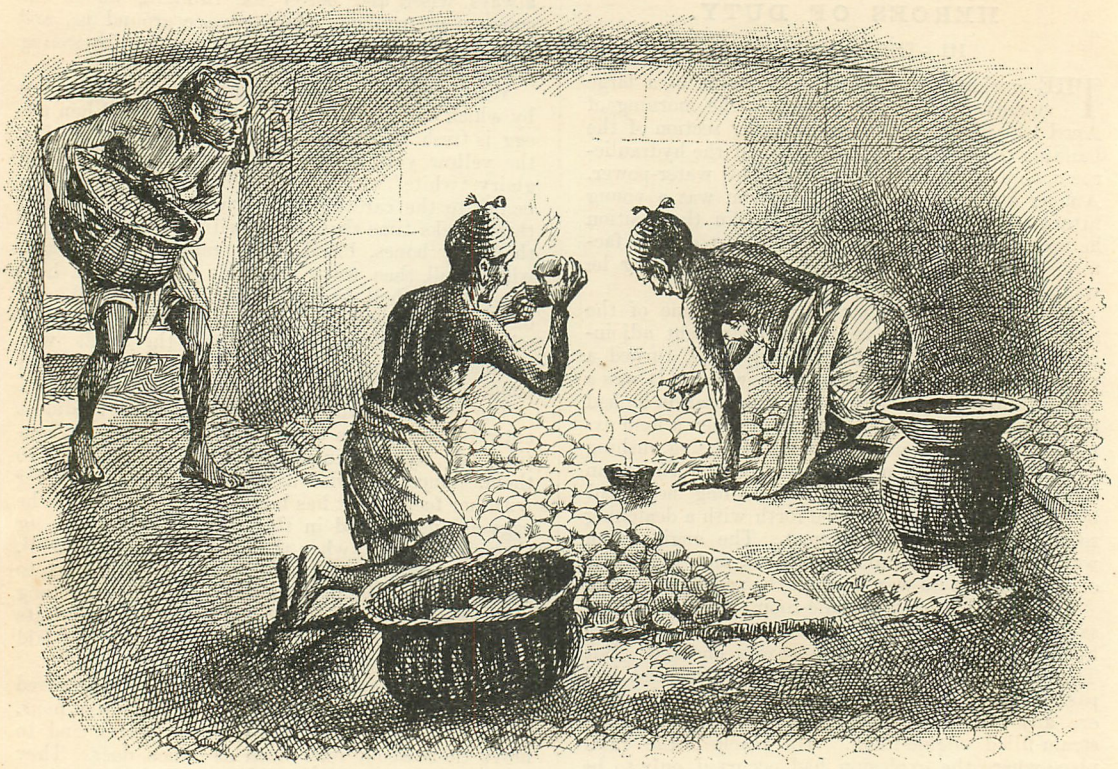
What could be stranger than the series of changes by which an egg is turned into a chick? When the egg is fresh, its shell is completely filled with fluids, the yellow yolk wrapped in a delicate bag, and a glairy 'white' which surrounds it. But if the egg be left to the care of the hen which has laid it, in three weeks' time these fluids will have changed into the flesh, bones, blood, and brains of a chicken, which will then wake up, as it were, pick a hole through its shell, and step out into the world. If, on the other hand, the egg is entirely neglected, it will turn 'bad,' as we say, and the fluids will gradually change to gases, which have a very bad odour, and are to a certain extent poisonous.

The care which the hen gives to her eggs is almost entirely confined to sitting upon them nearly continuously, so as to impart the heat of her body to them. Once or twice a day she turns them over with her feet, and it has been discovered that if the eggs are not turned in this way, the chicks die, or they are deformed when they come out of the shell. About twice a day the hen must leave her nest to obtain something to eat; but she is never long absent, and we may say that practically she sits upon the eggs from the time when they are laid until the time when the chickens are hatched.

Thousands of years ago the Egyptians discovered that they could hatch eggs without the help of hens. Their method was to keep the eggs warm, and to move them about very much as a hen does. They built special houses, containing a number of ovens, in which the eggs were placed, and heated by means of dull, slow fires. In Egypt, as in most other Eastern countries, men's ways and fashions remain the same, or nearly the same, for centuries, and in that country eggs are hatched in ovens to-day in just the same way as thousands of years ago.

The houses in which the Egyptians hatch these eggs have usually three rooms, two of which serve as entrance-chamber and store-room for the attendant, while the third contains the ovens, which are arranged in two rows, so as to leave a very narrow arched corridor between them. The fronts of the ovens form the sides of the corridor, and the whole of the space between this narrow passage and the outer walls of the building is occupied by the ovens. As all the ovens are alike, I need only describe one of them. It is divided into two stories, and the chief peculiarity is that the fireplace occupies the upper story, and is above the oven, which forms the lower story, and is half buried below the surface of the ground upon which the house is built. To prevent confusion, I shall always speak of the upper room as the fireplace and the lower one as the oven, and if you remember that a sitting hen warms her eggs from above, you are not likely to forget that the Egyptian egg-oven is below the fire which warms it.

The oven is a low room about ten feet square and four or five feet high. It has two openings, one a little arch leading into it from the corridor, the other a round hole made in the ceiling, and passing through into the fireplace above. The fireplace



An Egyptian Egg Oven.

is a similar room, but it has a vaulted or arched roof about nine feet high. There are several openings into the fireplace besides the one leading down to the oven. There is one to the corridor, and there is one on each side leading to the adjoining fireplaces. There is also a sort of very small skylight, which is nearly always closed.

The fires, which are not always burning, are laid in two brick troughs or trenches, which are set in a line with the corridor, one at the back and the other at the front of the fireplace. The fuel which is used is dried refuse, mixed with chopped straw. It burns slowly, like peat, giving out a dull red heat.

When all is ready, the attendant places his eggs in a number of the ovens, laying them upon mats strewed with bran. The fires are lighted in the fireplaces above, but they are allowed to go out twice a day, and are relighted after a short interval. Probably the reason for allowing the fires to go out is to let the eggs cool for a time, just as if the sitting hen had gone away to get something to eat. Every twelve hours or thereabouts all the eggs are moved. Those which lay along the front and back of the oven, immediately under the fires, are now placed along the sides, and those from the sides are worked round to the back or front. This ensures not only the turning of each egg, but allows each to get a varying amount of heat, just as if it were moved about under the body of a fowl. The eggs are rearranged in this way for ten or eleven days, and then are transferred to another oven, which is not heated by a fire. Here they lie for eight or ten days more, until the chicks pick their way out of the shells. During this time the eggs are repeatedly turned as before, and though they are not warmed by fires, they are carefully shielded from draughts.

The climate of Egypt is such that the egg-ovens can only be worked successfully during the months of March and April. A single house will sometimes hatch one hundred and fifty thousand eggs in one season. These eggs are collected from the farmers, and the attendant of the egg-ovens returns one chicken for every two eggs which he receives. The remaining chickens are his payment, but it must be remembered that many of the eggs do not turn out successful. As a rule, about two-thirds (or four-sixths) of the eggs produce chickens, and as the attendant returns chickens for one half (or three-sixths) of the whole number of eggs, the worki g out of a little sum will show you that he receives the chickens from only one-sixth of the eggs for his share, the remaining eggs being failures.

THE WONDERFUL SAW.

'WELL,' said a carpenter, 'of all the saws that I ever saw, I never saw a saw saw as I saw that saw saw.'

A GREEDY PUSS.

'IT is my dainty fare, you know,
That makes my coat like silk;
I've had a lovely plate of fish,
A saucer, too, of milk.

'But something more I want to-day
(A secret I will tell),
Like Mistress in the dining-room,
I'll have dessert as well.

'I do not fancy grapes or pears—
For fruit I'm not inclined;
I think I'll wander round about
To see what I can find.'

With this, our greedy Mistress Puss
Went roaming round the house,
Until she fancied she could hear
The squeakings of a mouse.

'Twas in the kitchen! Round she peered,
Excited as could be!
At last she saw, within a jug,
A mouse and children three!

Her green eyes gleamed with hungry joy:
Cried she, 'Ah, here's a feast!
I see enough before my gaze
For *two* desserts at least!'

She slipped her head inside the jug,
She twisted it about,
And then, alas! what do you think?
She could not get it out!

In mortal fear she tossed and rolled,
The place was quite a wreck;
She broke the jug at length, and found
A collar round her neck!

Said Mousie, as with twinkling eye
She quickly skurried past,
'I'm pleased to see, Miss Pussy Cat,
You've your *deserts* at last!'

ABOUT LARKS.

IT is curious to observe how cattle, when grazing in a meadow, will carefully avoid damaging a lark's nest if it comes in their way. They will crop the grass all round the nest, leaving a high wall of green to form a protection, but the nest itself they will not disturb.

A lark will seldom alight on the ground in the immediate neighbourhood of her nest. In this she shows, like many other creatures, a caution almost amounting to deceit. She will alight, say, a hundred yards away from her brood, but never on the same spot; and then she will run covertly along the ground till she reaches home without being observed. Her favourite nesting-place is the centre of a cornfield; this she knows will be untrodden by human foot till harvest-time, long before which her cares will be over. But even among the young corn she will seldom alight in the same spot, for fear of betraying her nest. You may be sure there is a nest within fifty yards, but it is a work of patience to find it.

It is possible to watch a nestful of young larks being brought up by placing them in a cage with the door open upon some tree in the neighbourhood. The mother will come in and out and feed them. As they grow older, remove the cage gradually nearer your house. It will require calculation to say when the young birds can do without their mother; if you are a day out you may lose the whole brood. Even though you calculate correctly, the mother has been known to bring some poisonous plant at the last moment and administer it to her offspring, preferring to take away their lives rather than to have them, as she thinks, made captive.

HEROINES OF THE CIVIL WAR.

III.—MRS. LUCY HUTCHINSON.

'HASTE thee, child, and get the lint and the bandages ready, while I warm this posset over the fire; if we make haste thou wilt have time to visit a few of the sick folk with me, ere the hour arrives for thy lesson on the lute.'

Little Lucy Apsley, to whom these words were addressed, raised her head reluctantly from the book over which she was poring, in one of the deep-set windows overlooking the river, in the Tower of London.

'I would rather read my book, Mother,' she said, 'for I love not to see wounds. 'Twas well enough for maidens to think of things like these in the olden days, when our country was everlastingly at war with the Scots or the French; but now it is at peace, and surely such gruesome sights may be left to the chirurgeons.'

A troubled look passed over Lady Apsley's fair face at her little girl's words. She did not wish to force the child to accompany her on her errands of mercy against her will, yet she would fain teach her such medical skill as she herself possessed; she had learned it from the great Sir Walter Raleigh, who had been a prisoner in the Tower for thirteen long years, and who had beguiled the monotony of his imprisonment by trying chemical experiments, and by talking to any visitors who came to see him about the medicinal uses of herbs and plants, which he had learned during his travels in the New World.

'True, sweetheart,' she replied gently. 'But because we are favoured to live in peaceful times, that is no reason why we should not be prepared for aught that may come. Thou art but a child, but, please God, thou hast a long life before thee, and some day thou wilt be glad that thou hadst the good fortune to learn the cures for divers wounds and sicknesses from the lips of one who has listened to the words of Sir Walter Raleigh. He was more learned in these things than many chirurgeons. The poor may never die out of the land, dear, and thou canst always minister to them, even if thou art never called to minister to the sick in more heroic ways.'

Lucy shut her book and slid from the broad window-seat. Her position as daughter of the Lieutenant of the Tower of London, had made her more thoughtful than most girls of her age, for she was her mother's constant companion, and Lady Apsley devoted much of her time to ministering to the sick and sorrowful, and in trying to lighten the sad lot of the prisoners under her husband's care, so Lucy had seen more of the dark side of life than she might otherwise have done.

'Tis true, Mother,' she said, opening a cupboard door, and proceeding to take down some bottles, and one or two neat rolls of bandages; 'and I am sure thou hast hearkened well to the great Sir Walter's teaching, for thou art cleverer and gentler than all

the chirurgeons in London, and the poor folk love thee, and look for thy coming. It makes up for everything when I see how their faces lighten when they see thee cross their thresholds.

Lady Apsley smiled. 'Ah, thou little flatterer,' she said, 'I fear thou seest through love-bedimmed spectacles, but I am content so long as thou goest with me, for I would fain have my Lucy grow into a useful woman, and there is no work more woman-like than to aid the sick and suffering, wheresoever they are found.'

Wise Lady Apsley! Little did she think as she spoke those words what rich fruit they were to bear in after years in her child's life.

Time went on, and little Lucy grew into a woman, and once more, history gives us a peep at her.

The great civil war has broken out, and King Charles had set up his standard outside the town of Nottingham, whose inhabitants had thrown in their lot with the Puritans, and whose Castle is garrisoned by Parliamentary soldiers.

The Governor of the Castle is Colonel Hutchinson, who has come to take command from his beautiful country house of Owthorpe, and his young wife has come with a pair of sturdy little twin sons and a wee delicate baby girl to share the dangers of his position with him. And no wife was ever better fitted to share her husband's danger, for Mrs. Hutchinson was no other than the little girl whom we have seen reading her book in the deep window of the Tower of London, and she has grown to be all that her mother hoped she would be.

It is a dark, windy autumn evening. All day a battle had raged round about the little town, for in the morning the King's troops attacked the castle, and Colonel Hutchinson and his soldiers sallied out to repulse them.

Long and anxiously has his wife listened to the dropping shots, and strained her eyes through the narrow window. She could see nothing, and no one has returned to tell her how things are going. But now the shots have ceased, and a soldier comes hastily through the deserted streets bearing a note from her husband telling her that he had won the day, and that he is sending a party of Royalist prisoners to the castle, as well as a number of sorely wounded men.

There is no surgeon at hand, no one to render any assistance, save one man who has a little skill in surgery, and Mrs. Hutchinson calls him to her side.

Together they go to the store-cupboard and look over the scanty store of balsams and plasters; then they set to work to tear up linen into bandages and send the waiting-maids to fill jugs and basins with clear cold water.

Presently the tramp of armed men is heard. The soldiers are returning, their prisoners in their midst.

Room has to be found for these men, no easy matter in the crowded state of the castle. 'Put them into the chapel,' suggests some one; 'tis large enough and safe enough, for its windows look out on the inner courtyard, and there is no means of escape from thence.'

So into the chapel the men were marched—muddy, and dirty, and worn out—and when it is full the door is locked, and soldiers set to guard it.

Mrs. Hutchinson, standing in the great hall, looks after them with pitying eyes. 'When our own men are fed,' she thinks to herself, 'I will beg leave to go with my maidens and carry food and water to them, for, by their looks, they stand much in need of refreshment.'

But there is other work waiting for her. Already hastily formed stretchers are being carried into the hall, on which lie wounded men. Her face grows pale as she sees them, and her lips quiver, for every one of these poor fellows is well known to her. They have served under her husband ever since the war began, and the sight of their sufferings is almost more than she can bear. Many a woman would have fainted, or turned away trembling from the sight, but she is made of sterner stuff than that.

Calling to her maidens to bring her the basins and the bandages, she begins her trying task. With fingers that never falter, and with cheering words, she goes from one to another, doing the work that would be left to surgeons and trained nurses nowadays; washing the wounds, gently probing for the bullets, till the work is finished and the last patient has been attended to, the last bandage fastened.

Now she has time to take note of what is passing around her.

'Still more wounded?' she asks anxiously, as she catches sight of a motionless figure being carried along one of the stone passages which run outside the hall. 'Where are they taking him to? Bring him in here, we can still find room; we will lay mattresses or bags of straw on the floor.'

''Tis one of the enemy, my lady,' mutters a soldier who stands by, a look of fierce triumph coming into his eyes. 'Our men have brought in some half-dozen, sore wounded. Better to have left them to perish on the field, or mayhap to put them out of the way altogether. But I reckon they will not live long in the Lion's Den. 'Twill serve our purpose as well as shot or shell would do.'

'The Lion's Den!' repeats Mrs. Hutchinson, in dismay, for that is the name by which a miserable hole of a dungeon, which runs right under the Castle, is known. 'Are our soldiers mad that they carry any wounded man to the Lion's Den? Go, sirrah, and stop them; tell them I desire that the wounded men be brought here.'

'They are our enemies,' mutters the soldier again. Clearly vengeance and hatred have eaten deeply into his heart.

'Shame on you, fellow!' cries the Governor's wife, 'and wouldst thou speak thus of helpless men, wounded mayhap to death? Wouldst thou carry them to a dungeon and leave them to their fate? Bring them to me, I tell thee, and that right speedily.'

Slowly and reluctantly the soldier goes on his errand, and slowly and reluctantly the six wounded prisoners are carried up from the loathsome dungeon on the damp floor of which they have been placed. They look for no mercy—mercy was not shown to prisoners in those days—but they find it.

Their wounds are dressed as tenderly, and they are nursed as carefully, as though they had belonged to the garrison, and as long as English history lasts, the story will be told of how Lucy Hutchinson saved the lives of her husband's enemies in Nottingham Castle.

"'I desire that the wounded men be brought here.'"

"The rocket stands in readiness."

IN PERIL ON THE SEA.

A CHILL grey dawn steals o'er the world,
Far in the sky the shadows flee,
The winds are making restless moan,
And there is sorrow on the sea.

Upon the rocks a vessel lies,
And hearts are breaking with despair;
The coastguard through his glass can see
The mariners in peril there.

From women watchers on the land
Ascends an earnest, voiceless plea,
To Him Who stilled in bygone days
The storm-tost waves of Galilee.

A cry is borne across the deep,
And there is anguish in the sound;
Alas! no boat can reach the ship,
The tide is low, and rocks abound.

Yet help is nigh; the rocket stands
In readiness each life to save:
A stalwart sailor bides his time
To fire the light line o'er the wave.

The deed is done—the line secured,
A little while of toil and care—
And joy arises in each heart,
For hope has vanquished grim despair.

And one by one the shipwrecked crew
Are borne in safety o'er the sea,
And joyous praise ascends to Him
Who stilled the waves of Galilee.

SHEEP-SHEARING.

THE months of June and July see the shepherds busy. The sheep are 'dipped' in a large tub one by one. Their struggles are overcome by two or three strong men. A sheep is plunged into the solution with only its nostrils above the surface, and vigorously washed. The immersion causes the poor animal to gasp for breath in a pitiable manner. When released, it springs out of its tub, shakes off the dripping streams, and two hours later, on a sunny day, it is dry. This washing increases the value of the fleece, which is taken off soon afterwards.

The shearer is an important individual. His craft often runs in families. A father and two sons, for example, do much of the shearing round Cambridge. The writer saw them at work one day. The night before they slept in a barn, and were astir early. Each sheep fleeced means threepence to the workers, and a man will do perhaps forty in a day. He takes the animal, ties its legs, throws it on its back, and soon the shears are at work, cutting off the wool in circles. An adept shearer will take off the fleece all in one piece. This he rolls up into a neat bundle to facilitate the counting. Where an accidental cut is made in the sheep's flesh, lime is at once applied to prevent an attack by flies.

The fleece is generally worth about ten shillings to the farmer, who usually sells his stock to the nearest buyer – generally a 'middle-man,' who, in his turn, disposes of it to the wool-merchants.

The sheep, without their fleeces, are more easily inspected as to their condition. The old ones may perhaps be set aside for the butcher. Young ones are kept for stock purposes, and all receive the red marks which show their fate. At this time they also have their teeth examined.

It is curious that a sheep in poor condition may yet be profitable. A very thin old sheep was turned out by a farmer a little while ago, and a labourer suggested its doom. 'No,' said the farmer; 'old Topsy may be worth only five shillings in the market, but she yields almost the heaviest fleece in the flock, and every season adds her couple of lambs to the fold.' So the animal was marked with a sign in red, which gave her her life for another season.

PIETRO'S REPENTANCE.

THE vintage was over in the Mantuan district, and at Pratella, though the greater part of the grapes had been sold, the peasants were merrily 'treading the wine-press.' Along with the peasants, two or three merry children were dancing on the grapes in the vats, and, as their grandfather looked on, enjoying their delight at the new pastime, he thought that if the modern methods of extracting the juice from the grapes are more practical, this old one was certainly the most picturesque.

His eyes wandered away over the flat land, with its long lines of mulberry-trees between which the vines were stretched, away to the village of Pietole, sacred as the birthplace of Virgil, whose monument rises there above the villas and the simple cottages of the peasants. The brightness passed from his face, and a frown gathered on his brow.

'Desiderio!' he called to one of the peasants, 'has Pietro been dismissed as I ordered?'

'Yes, sir,' replied the youth, standing upright in the vat, 'some days ago, but he is still at Pietole.'

The master turned away, and the peasants began to chatter to one another about Pietro's bad behaviour and insolence.

'He's not bad, Pietro,' said Angela, 'but he is led so easily by that cousin of his, who is a worthless fellow. I am afraid he will end badly, if he keeps following him!'

'Poor Pietro!' exclaimed little Rosa, who had been listening, 'he has been very naughty to Grandfather. I heard him shouting dreadfully; but Pietro will be good again, and he will come and lift me over the hedges, and take me in his arms when the oxen run away.'

'Carà!' exclaimed Angela, stooping to give her a kiss, as the Italian peasants are accustomed to do to their employers' children. 'Pietro has little good sense: I fear he will never come here again. But now, look; the juice has all run into the barrel. Jump out, and get your little legs washed. Come, Elena, you too.'

Blue-eyed Rosa and black-eyed Elena obeyed, calling loudly to their cousin Athlio to come out from the other vat, where he seemed to be executing a sort of war-dance. Rosa, however, seeing her

grandfather near, ran up to him, and slipping her little hand into his, said pleadingly, 'Nonno [Grandfather] dear, do tell Angela to make some *sugolo*. We have been working so hard, you know! Just look at my legs!'

Her grandfather smiled as he looked down at the winning little figure, with her petticoats gathered around her knees, and her chubby legs stained purple with must. 'Certainly, dear,' he replied, 'Whoever heard of a vintage without *sugolo?*' and Rosa clapped her hands in glee, and ran off to give the joyful news to Elena, who was by now sitting on her cousin Athlio's shoulder.

Sugolo is the name given by the Mantuan peasants to a sort of hasty pudding, made with the juice of the newly crushed grapes instead of water. It is considered a great treat. It is quickly made, but as the children gathering round the hearth in the kitchen on which the sticks were crackling rather hindered Angela in her cooking, she proposed they should go, with their mother's permission, to get the milk from the neighbouring dairy, along with her little sister Bianca—young enough to be their playmate, and old enough to keep them out of trouble on the country roads. So, at least, all believed.

Just about this time, Pietro Ferrari, a sullen-looking lad of about fifteen, was trudging along the high road from Pietole to Mantua with wild, bitter thoughts of vengeance in his heart. His disobedience and insolence to his master had been but the result of his conversations with his worthless cousin, who had acquired habits which the sober, industrious inhabitants of the district could not approve of, and who was delighted to find some one foolish enough to admire him. It was this cousin, too, who had hinted at means of revenge far beyond the harm received, and the foolish youth had so wrought himself up to consider himself deeply wronged, that he let the wicked words linger in his heart and work in his brain. Just as he was passing Pratella, and throwing a glance of hatred at the place, a burst of merry laughter startled him, and little Rosa bounded upon him from behind a hedge, where she had been hiding.

'I can get through a hedge now, Pietro,' she cried. 'I don't need you to lift me over. But I'm still afraid of the oxen when they run out of the stall.' Then she slipped her little hand into his rough one confidingly. 'Pietro,' she said, 'I wish you had not made Grandfather so angry. Grandfather is good to us, you know. He is letting Angela make *sugolo*. Pietro, do come and have some. Angela always makes such a lot; but if not I will give you half of mine.'

The lad looked down on her, half bewildered, then, letting the little hand fall, and giving out only an inarticulate growl, he strode on. The other children, coming up, called to Rosa to come with them, but she signed to them to wait, and ran after Pietro. 'Pietro! Pietro!' she called, and, hardly treated as he thought he was, he could not but turn at the sound of that little voice. 'Pietro, I don't care to go to the dairy,' she said, coaxingly; 'do carry me to the gate on your shoulder—do, Pietro!'

The boy hesitated, then stooped and took up the child. Elena and Bianca shouted, 'Don't eat all the *sugolo*, Rosa!' and ran off in the other direction, while Pietro walked silently on, listening to the prattle of the child who had so often ridden on his shoulders before. He had not said a word to her, when he set her down at the gate, and opened it for her hurriedly, almost shamefacedly, fearing that his late master or his old companions might see him, and think him yielding.

'Thank you, Pietro!' said Rosa. 'But do come and have some *sugolo*, won't you? Well, I will put some away for you to eat when you *do* come back. And I will ask Grandfather not to let the oxen out till you do, for they frighten me.'

Off she ran, and Pietro walked on with bitter thoughts in his heart. No, he could not do it! It would be easy for him to fire the hayricks, now the the vintage was over and the fields were not guarded; but then he could never again look into Rosa's bright eyes, even if suspicion never fell on him. After all, perhaps he had been wrong. He had been employed to carry out a certain task, and if he had neglected it, it was but right he should be reprimanded for it, and he *had* been insolent—even his old mother had told him so.

He drew aside to let a carriage pass, which was followed by another, drawn by a horse which seemed somewhat wild.

'That lawyer,' muttered Pietro, 'will be killed yet, if he doesn't change that horse! Oh! helo!'

The exclamation of agony burst from him as he started to rush towards the horse. Little Rosa had been running along the other side of the hedge, and had burst out again too near the horse, which had broken into a mad gallop. She saw her danger, and gave a shriek of terror, for she could not turn quickly enough; but a strong hand pulled her back, and she turned round to find Pietro holding her, and felt a tear fall on her face, while the horse rushed on, to be stopped a minute later by Rosa's grandfather himself, who, having seen the child from a distance, had followed her, and had been a witness of her danger and of her escape.

He came up, with a pale face and trembling lips, and, even before taking Rosa into his arms, held out his hand to Pietro.

'Come back to-morrow,' he said; 'we will let bygones be bygones.'

The child was now hugging her grandfather tightly, and for a moment, nothing could be said; then Pietro, with downcast eyes and trembling lips, said, hesitatingly:

'Thank you, sir. I know I was wrong. I would come willingly, I shall never have a better master than you, but—but—I meant to fire your hayricks to-night. You can have me arrested if you like.'

Before her grandfather could speak, Rosa gave a loud cry: 'Naughty Pietro! my doll is sleeping in the hayloft. Grandfather, let me go for it,' and she tried to slip from his arms.

'Be quiet,' he exclaimed, almost impatiently; then to Pietro, 'My lad,' he said, 'I have no doubt that many wicked thoughts have been passing through your mind, and you might even have put them into

"A strong hand pulled her back."

action. I don't believe it, however. You might have taken revenge on me in a far more fearful way without running any risk. Instead, you have saved my treasure. Pietro, take my advice, leave your cousin's company and turn over a new leaf. I will never forget what you have done for me this evening. There's my hand on it.'

Pietro, much moved, clasped it, and not long after he was sitting on the threshing-floor, eating his plate of *suyolo* happily. Now he is manager of Pratella.

SOME OF NATURE'S MARVELS.

III.—SPONGE-SPICULES.

IN the first two chapters of this series (pages 28 and 59), the wondrous part which some of the lowliest of living things have played, in the building up of the world we live in was described. The creatures which

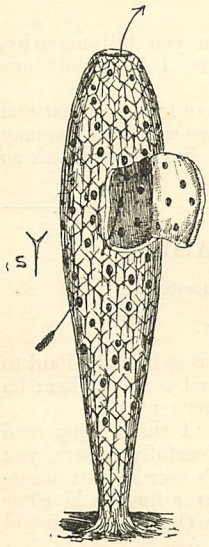


Fig. 1.

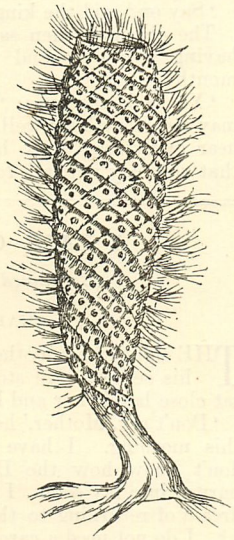


Fig. 2.

Fig. 1.—Clathrina Sponge: s, Spicule removed from body. The arrow shows the course of the water current through the sponge.
Fig. 2.—Venus's Flower-basket Sponge.

are to form the subject of our present chapter are the Sponges. Though they are, relatively, of large size, and though the part which they have played in

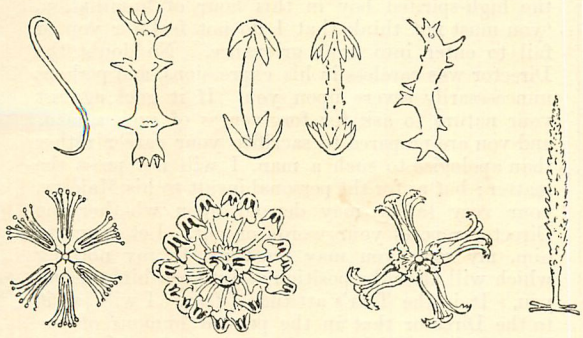


Fig. 3.—Various Sponge Spicules.

the past history of the world is, comparatively speaking, unimportant, yet they most certainly deserve a special place in our series, if only on account of the extreme beauty of certain parts of their structure. The relationships of the sponges have puzzled some of the wisest of scientific men, but they are now regarded as standing midway between the Protozoa—the simplest, lowest forms of

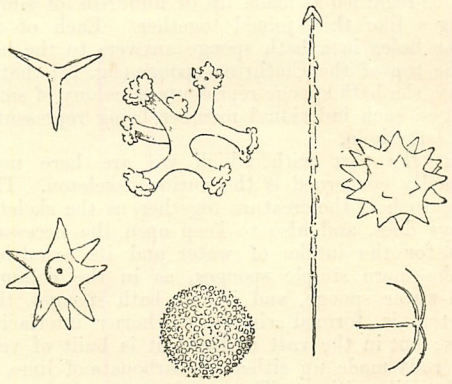
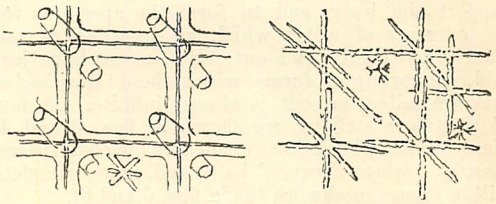
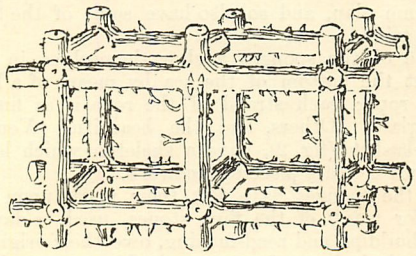


Fig. 4.—Various Sponge Spicules.

life, the group to which the Foraminifera and Radiolaria belong—and those animals which have, among other things, a body-cavity, like the fresh-water Hydra and the Corals. Varied in shape, and often vividly coloured, they are also peculiar on





Figs. 5 and 6.—Square Sponge Spicules.

account of their manner of breathing and feeding, and of their skeleton.

Whatever their shape, all have the surface of the body pierced by innumerable holes, which lead, generally, into a series of branching tubes, which in turn lead to other tubes, and finally to the outer world again. Through these tubes constant streams of water are made to flow by means of innumerable

and exceedingly minute slender threads, which, by their continued lashing movements, draw in the fresh water through the body-wall, and drive it out again through one or more large mouths, as shown by the arrow in fig. 1. The common bath sponge may be regarded as made up of hundreds of simple sponges like this, joined together. Each of the larger holes in a bath sponge answers to the hole at the top of the Clathrina sponge (fig. 1); that is to say, the bath sponge represents a colony of small sponges, each individual member being represented by a large hole.

But the part with which we are here more especially concerned is the curious skeleton. This serves to hold the creature together, as the skeleton always does, and also to keep open the necessary holes for the intake of water and its expulsion. In the more simple sponges, as in the common fresh-water sponge, and in our bath sponges, this skeleton is formed simply of horny interlacing fibres; but in the vast majority it is built of very hard rods made up either of carbonate of lime, or of glass-like silica. These rods are so extremely small that a very powerful microscope is necessary to see them; but minute though they are, they present a bewildering variety of shapes, all of which are beautiful.

In their simplest form they take the shape of rods, or of three-rayed bodies not unlike arrow-heads in shape. Some of the latter, and the part they play, may be seen in the Clathrina sponge (fig. 1), where you may see at a glance how they contrive to support the body, and to form the apertures for the currents of water which we described as constantly passing in and out. But, as we have just said, the variety of forms which these 'spicules,' as they are called, present is almost infinite. A few of the more striking are shown in figs. 3 and 4. Here are rods, hooks, stars, anchors, barbed spears, rosettes, 'wheat-sheaves,' balls, and, more complete still, a square meshwork (as in figs. 5 and 6).

But the sponges are not the only animals which have devised this method of building up a skeleton by spicules: some of the Coral family have adopted the same plan, and so also have some of the Sea-urchin tribe.

Some of the sponges anchor themselves in the mud at the bottom of the sea by means of a long glassy rope; each strand of the rope is as fine as spun glass. Others, like the beautiful 'Venus's flower-basket' (fig. 2), have a skeleton which looks like some delicate piece of lacework.

But the sponges have left their mark upon the past, for many of the flint stones, used to-day in house-building and road-making, owe their origin to the dead bodies of sponges. If you carefully examine a stone-heap, such as may be met with along country roads, or if you break open a dozen or so of the large flint stones, such as are to be met with on the beach at the seaside, you will be sure to find some with traces of some old-time sponge in its centre. These flints, by the constant rolling and pounding of the waves, are slowly worn away and broken up, and in this way sand is made.

W. P. Pycraft, F.Z.S., A.L.S.

A WISE KING.

THERE once lived a very wise king, who, it was said, could answer any question put to him. People from all parts of the world came to ask his advice if they were in any trouble or difficulty. One day an old man who had heard reports of his great wisdom came to him, and, bowing almost to the ground, said, 'May it please your Majesty to answer me a question?'

'Say on,' said the king.

The old man then said, 'Can you tell me why, having two eyes and two ears, I have only one mouth?'

'Yes,' said the king; 'you have two eyes that you may see everything well, and two ears that you may hear everything well, but you have one mouth so that you may not talk *too much*.'

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 82.)

CHAPTER IX.

THE sight of his mother's distress brought Paul to his senses. He stopped and came to her; he sat close beside her and kissed her tenderly.

'Don't cry, Mother,' he said; 'I think I am mad this morning. I have been fearfully upset; you don't know how the Director's words hurt me—burned into my soul. I can never forgive him nor dream of returning to the Page Corps—why should I? I do not need a career in Russia.'

'Your father's country, darling; don't forget that.'

'No, I don't; but my father was a man of spirit, and would not have liked me to eat humble pie at the hands of a man like the Director, who is known to be a mere toady of the Court—a bureaucrat of the worst kind! He has deeply insulted me this day; I will not apologise to him or return to the Page Corps. As for the Tsar——'

'Darling,' said his mother, who, in spite of her distress, could not help feeling great sympathy for the high-spirited boy in this hour of humiliation, 'you must not think that I do not feel for you or fail to enter into your grievance. No doubt the Director was careless in his expressions, and perhaps unnecessarily severe upon you. If it goes against your nature to ask for forgiveness of such a man, and you are prepared to sacrifice your career rather than apologise to such a man, I will not press the matter; but as for the personal insult to his Majesty, your very safety may depend upon whether the Director reports your words or not. Let me go to him, my son; you may trust me to say nothing which will alter the position as between himself and you. It is the Tsar's attitude I fear. I will put it to the Director that in the present humour of the Emperor it would be unsafe to report the episode at the Page Corps as it actually happened.'

Paul considered awhile. 'Well, we will make a compromise, then,' he said. 'You shall do as you suggest, but you shall not say a single word that in the least degree makes the Director think I wish to ask *his* pardon.'

Thus the conversation ended, for the Countess knew that in his present mood it was mere waste of time to attempt to persuade her headstrong son to agree to any further concession. His career, she saw with regret, was at an end; his life and liberty depended upon whether the words he had spoken of the Autocracy—that is, of the Tsar's personal Government—were reported to his Majesty or not. Moreover, there was not a moment to spare, for who could tell whether the aggrieved Director would not, in the fury of the moment in which he had been browbeaten and defied by a student, take that course which would be the most harmful and fatal to the offender—go straight to the Palace and report him?

So the Countess ordered her carriage and drove in haste to the Page Corps, where she was relieved to learn that the Director was at home. He had probably not, then, as yet taken the extreme course she so dreaded.

She found his Excellency in a condition of great excitement; his usually pale face was flushed. He sat at the table in his luxurious study, writing.

'Ah, I have expected you, Madam,' he said. 'Doubtless your foolish boy has reported to you the disgraceful conduct of which he has been guilty. I give you my word, Countess, that never in all my life have I suffered as I have suffered this day. Doubtless your son has realised, too late, the gravity of his offence, and has returned to apologise and beg forgiveness. It is too late.'

'My son is not here, Excellency,' said the Countess. Greatly as she desired to obtain the end for which she had come, the manner of the Director 'set her back up,' if one may be permitted a homely expression. 'I fear that he has no intention of requesting to be forgiven and allowed to re-enter the Lyceum.'

'It would be useless, Madam. On the contrary, it is my intention to report to his Majesty the revolutionary expressions made use of by your son; that so dangerous a member of an aristocratic family should remain at large is impossible. Think of the example which is here set to the masses! The name of a Count Stirinof is influential in the country. The bearer of such a name cannot be permitted to use in public language such as your son has seen fit to use. The effect would be disastrous.'

'Do you mean that you intend to report my son's words to his Majesty?' asked the Countess, paling.

'Such is my intention; the Tsar shall hear and judge for himself. As for your son's insult to myself, that is a small matter, though naturally he could never be permitted to re-enter this establishment.'

'Your Excellency, let me entreat you——' began the Countess.

The Director held up his hand. 'Madam, it is impossible. By his foolishness your son has entirely ruined his career. Whether the Tsar, in his clemency, may see fit to spare his life—well, that is for his Majesty to decide.'

'His life!' gasped the mother.

'Certainly. Have you realised the meaning of the words used? "Autocracy of caprice and brutality!" This from a Count Stirinof—an aristocrat of the Empire! Certainly his life is in danger.'

'Excellency, have mercy!'

The Director shrugged his shoulders. 'Go to the Tsar, Madam,' he said; 'it is no affair of mine.'

'Excellency,' pleaded the Countess, 'have you considered? His Majesty is, as we all know well, at present very busy and worried. It is possible that not only my son, but yourself also, might suffer from the anger which such a report might rouse.'

'Such a consideration would not prevent me from taking that course which I consider to be my duty,' said the Director. 'As a faithful and loyal servant of his Majesty, I gladly forget my personal interests and think only of that which is due to the Tsar. If I suffer for my loyalty, I am content.'

Countess Stirinof felt a strong dislike for this hypocrite rising within her.

'Perhaps together with your loyalty,' she said, 'there may exist a desire to revenge yourself upon my boy, who has offended you. Be warned, Mr. Director; I too may ask to be received by his Majesty.'

'I suggested it myself, Madam,' said the Director. 'Appeal to his Majesty if you wish to do so.'

'In that case I should request the Tsar to order an inquiry into the management of an institution in which a high-spirited youth, like my son Paul, is permitted to associate with revolutionists.'

'You will doubtless do as you please, Madam,' said the Director. 'Your threats do not shake me in my determination to do my duty. Allow me to thank you for the warning you have given me of your intentions. I shall do my best to explain my conduct to his Majesty.'

The Countess Stirinof thus parted with the Director under a kind of declaration of war. Lest she should proceed at once to the Winter Palace and thus anticipate his report, the Director himself drove quickly to the Palace, where he was received by a confidential Minister of the Tsar without delay. The Countess had not as yet been received in audience.

The Director made his report. He repeated Paul's words exactly as spoken; there was no need to exaggerate.

'He said that?' exclaimed the Minister. 'The Count Paul Stirinof! Impossible!' His Excellency was astonished—amazed—incredulous!

'Alas, Excellency! it is true; the youth, though of good and aristocratic birth, the son of a faithful servant of his Majesty and of his Imperial father, has unfortunately shown for some little while an independence of spirit which I have found it impossible to curb, even by the strongest measures. He escaped from control in order to attend the procession of students which, by his Majesty's orders, was suppressed. He was arrested, together with certain low persons of known revolutionary tendencies. When accused before the pupils of the Lyceum assembled to hear his conviction and condemnation, he showed personal violence towards those who should have carried out the sentence of degradation, and used the expressions which I have accurately reported. There is but one word to be said in mitigation of his offence: his mother is, as your Excellency is aware, a foreigner—an Englishwoman.'

(*Continued on page* 103.)

"'Don't cry, Mother,' he said.'

"Each sewed with diligence and ardour."

TWO NEGRO LEGENDS.

From the French of EDOUARD LABOULAYE.

AT St. Louis du Senegal I made friends with many negroes. Amongst those whom I saw most frequently was a tailor who was very fond of talking. He was continually trying to prove to me that black men are cleverer than white men.

'Are you aware,' he said one day, 'how I came to be married?'

'No,' I replied. 'I know that your wife is one of the most skilful needlewomen in St. Louis, but I do not know how you came to choose her.'

'It was *she* who chose *me*,' he said. 'I will tell you the story. It just shows how clever our women are.'

Once upon a time a tailor—who was destined to be my father-in-law—had a very beautiful daughter. All the young men of the place courted her. One day two rivals—you know one of them—came to see the girl.

'It is for your sake that we have come,' they said.

'What do you want with me?' she asked.

'We love you,' said both, 'and each of us wishes to marry you.'

The girl called her father, who listened to what the two suitors had to say.

'It is getting late,' then said the tailor. 'Come again to-morrow, and you shall be informed which of you two my daughter has chosen.'

At daybreak the next morning the young men returned.

'Here we are!' they said to the tailor. 'Remember your promise to us yesterday.'

Again the tailor put them off. 'I am going to the market,' he said, 'to buy some cloth. When I come back with it, I will tell you what I want you to do.'

On the tailor's return he summoned his daughter. When she had come, he told the young fellows that he had a task for them.

'My sons,' he said, 'there are two of you. I have only one daughter. To whom am I to give her? Here is a piece of cloth, out of which I will cut two similar garments. Each of you shall sew one, and he who first finishes his task shall be rewarded with my daughter's hand.'

The tailor then turned to his daughter. 'Take this thread,' he ordered, 'and prepare it for the workers.'

The girl took the ball of thread, and seated herself beside her lovers.

She knew well enough to which of the two she wished success. Neither her father nor the young men knew which she loved, but she herself knew perfectly. The tailor went out. The rivals took their needles and set to work The cunning maiden gave short needlefuls of thread to the youth whom she loved, and long needlefuls to the other. Each sewed with diligence and ardour. At eleven o'clock the work was scarcely half done. At three o'clock in the afternoon the worker with the short needlefuls had accomplished his task, but the other had not nearly finished his, for it took him much longer to pull the thread through the stitches.

When the tailor returned, the happy winner brought him the finished garment. The rival candidate was sewing away still.

'My sons,' said the tailor, 'I wished to treat you both with perfect fairness, and to give to each of you an equal chance. That was the reason why I divided the piece of cloth into equal portions, and told you that he who finished first should become my son-in-law. Did you understand?'

'Oh, yes!' replied both winner and loser. 'We understood you perfectly, and accepted the test. What is done is well done.'

But—as one of these young men has since discovered—the tailor was not so entirely disinterested as he desired to appear. 'He who finishes first,' he reasoned, 'will thereby prove himself the cleverest workman, and the cleverest workman will be of the most use to me in my shop.' But the young man's cleverness had, as we have seen, nothing to do with the result of the test; it was the cleverness of the girl which decided the matter. In this way she obtained the husband of her choice, while her father overreached himself.

(*Concluded on page* 130.)

THE BLUE STAMP.

'LET me advise you to start as soon as possible, Mrs. Musgrave. I will not answer for the consequences if you are still here when the November fogs begin.'

These were the words Claude Musgrave heard as he paused in dismay at the door of the little sitting-room. Their own doctor and a strange gentleman were standing talking to his mother, who leaned back in her chair, looking white and tired.

Soon the doctors took their leave, and mother and son were left together.

'Don't look so worried, Claude,' Mrs. Musgrave said, as Claude came and put his arm round her and kissed her. 'Doctors always make such a fuss. I shall soon be stronger if I am careful, and I do not mean to be sent away from my son.'

'But you must go, Mother. I heard what the strange doctor said when I came into the room.'

'It is quite impossible, Claude. It would cost such a lot of money, and you know how scarce pennies are just now.'

'And you spend them all on me,' Claude said, regretfully. 'Oh, Mother, do let me leave school and try to get into work at once.'

'And so spoil all the plans I have made for you! No, Claude, you know it has been the dearest wish of my heart to give you a good education; and you have worked so well and have a fair chance of winning the scholarship you are going in for.'

'But there must be some way. Oh, Mother! I would beg, or borrow, or almost steal, rather than see you getting thinner and weaker.'

'We have no near friends of whom we could beg or borrow, Claude, and I am glad to say there could be no question of taking what did not belong to him where my boy is concerned,' Mrs. Musgrave said, proudly.

'If only you would use my school-money and let

me work!' Claude said. 'I could live on next to nothing, or starve, if it would do any good.'

'Claude, if you love me, do not say another word on the subject. Now let us talk of something more cheerful. Do you see that Dr. Burns has brought the book on birds he promised to lend you?'

Claude took up the book and turned the pages, but he hardly saw the beautiful photographs of birds and their nests, which would have delighted him so much at any other time. How could he help being anxious about his mother? He was devoted to her, and had been her constant companion ever since his father died. The grave words and looks of the strange doctor haunted him, and a great fear came over him that he might lose his beloved mother if she did not obey the doctor's orders.

Presently she went away to rest, and then Claude gave up all pretence of reading and wandered to the window; but the dull street made him still more depressed, so he came back to his book and began to turn the pages.

A blue stamp, which looked as if it had been used for a marker, caught his attention, and a sudden gleam of interest lighted up his face. Could it be—yes, it was one of those rare Mauritius stamps, which were so valuable.

'I say, this is a find!' he murmured to himself. 'How splendid if it should turn out to be worth a lot of money!'

Then his breath came fast as he thought what a good sum would mean to him just then.

Of course, it might not be a perfect specimen, but he had heard that several hundred pounds had been given for a specimen of this rare stamp.

But was it his to sell? The sudden thought broke up all his castles in the air. Then came the fight between right and wrong, and for some time it seemed as if Claude's honour would not hold out against the strain put on it. A stamp was such a small thing. Dr. Burns probably knew nothing of its value, and might even have forgotten he possessed it. Any way, he did not deserve to profit by it if he were so careless as to leave it loose in a book.

But all the time Claude was arguing with himself in this way, he was conscious of something deeper still in his heart which was urging him in the right direction. All his life he had been trained to be truthful and honourable—never to tell a lie, but to be straight and open in all his dealings. If he did this, and hid the knowledge of it from his mother, would he ever be able to look her in the face again? So, in the end, right triumphed, and Claude went out sadly to return the stamp to its owner. He would not linger and allow the temptation to return, for he felt he might not be able to win the victory in a second fight.

There was a trace of coming fog in the air, and the leaden clouds seemed to weigh him down; but the doctor's house was soon reached, and his errand had to be explained.

'Of course I remember it now,' Dr. Burns said. 'I meant to take the stamp to a collector, and see what I could get for it, but I have been so busy it slipped from my memory. You know, Claude, a hard-worked doctor has some excuse for carelessness about things outside his profession.'

'I am very glad I found it, sir,' Claude said.

'Indeed, so am I,' was the laughing answer. 'A little ready cash would be most useful just now.'

Claude's conscience rebuked him for ever having thought of robbing a man like the doctor, who was noted for his kindly deeds among the poor.

'But you must certainly have your share of the profits, if we make any,' the doctor went on. 'I shall give you a tenth of what the stamp fetches. That will only be fair as you found it.'

'It is awfully good of you, sir,' Claude said; but Dr. Burns laughed, and told him not to be grateful until they had found out if the stamp were worthless or not.

So Claude went home cheerful, because he had been given courage to do the right thing. Even if the stamp should be worth one hundred pounds, his share of ten pounds would not be much help towards wintering abroad. But his mother might at any rate have a little change to a high moorland village in England, which would be the next best thing.

A few evenings later there was an impatient knock at the door, and in rushed Dr. Burns.

'Catch!' he said, throwing a packet towards Claude. 'Your share of the winnings!'

Then he stood in the doorway, his kindly face beaming with delight as the bewildered Claude took out of an envelope notes to the value of fifty pounds.

'But what does it mean? Have you given me the whole sum?' he asked.

'No, my dear boy. That little bit of blue paper turned out to be worth five hundred pounds! Good business, isn't it?' and he departed in the same whirlwind of hurry.

'Mother! Mother!' cried Claude. 'How long will it take you to get ready to start for Davos?'

'Have you suddenly gone crazy?' Mrs. Musgrave asked. 'I cannot understand what all this excitement is about.'

'Crazy with happiness, Mother dear,' Claude shouted, jumping up and waving the crisp notes above his head. 'Just think of it! Fifty pounds of my own to spend as I like! It seems too good to be true.'

'And you want to spend it on your old mother?' Mrs. Musgrave asked with tears in her eyes.

'To make you strong again,' Claude said. 'Oh, Mother, you cannot think how I have longed to have enough money to send you away! I nearly did a dreadful thing to get it.'

'Tell me all the story, dear,' she said.

There was silence for a minute when Claude had finished. Then Mrs. Musgrave spoke.

'Do you know, Claude, what pleases me even more than the money?'

'What, Mother?' he asked.

'The thought that my son did not yield when he was tempted to act dishonourably. Oh, Claude, I can leave you so happily now! There will be other temptations, and school life may not be so easy as the old home life with me; but try always to be true and straightforward, however much it may seem to cost at the time.'

"I put my head on one side
to listen for a whistle."

NOBODY'S DOG.

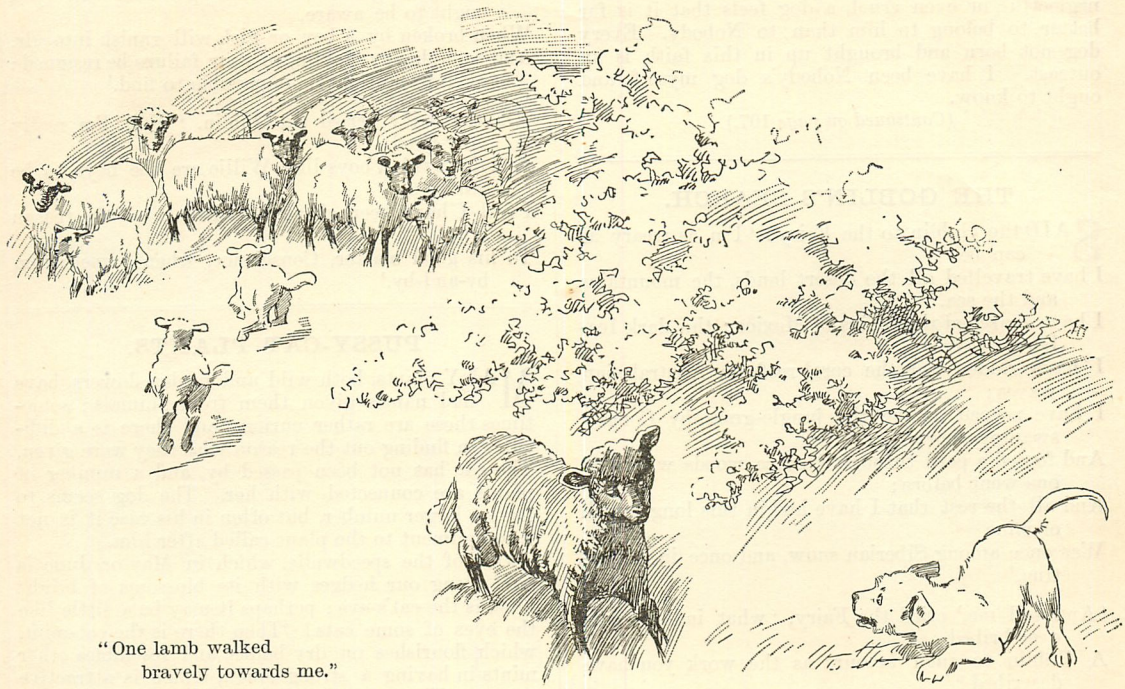
By Edith Carrington.

CHAPTER I.

I AM not a large dog—compared to a man, or even to a big boy, any dog is but a small creature. This is why men are the masters of dogs, I suppose. And yet I hardly think that this is the reason, after all. There is something in the spirit of the smallest man that makes him stronger than the biggest dog and wiser than the cleverest, and makes his spirit master of the dog's spirit. Once I did not know that men were the born masters of dogs, and this was the cause of my first trouble.

I was sitting one day in the sunshine outside a stable-door, wondering what I should do next. I was young, my legs were full of play and wanted to scamper, my tail wanted to wag—and I—I know now what it was I wanted, though I did not then. I wanted a master; somebody to follow, somebody to tell me what to do, somebody to love. Presently an old boy—that is, looked on as a boy he was old, but looked on as a man he was young—came down the broad gravel walk towards me from the grand house to which the stables belonged: my master, as it turned out.

He had paid one careless visit to me in the stables the night before. He was whistling and swinging a stick as he kicked at the loose pebbles in front of him. I cocked up my ears; here was just the thing for me! Stones to run after and somebody to throw



"One lamb walked bravely towards me."

them. I made a dash at the feet which were idly scattering the gravel, I thought I would have a good game of rats with them, but in a minute a sharp kick sent me flying. 'Bother the pup,' said my master. 'Go home, sir!' and, picking up a good-sized flint, he threw it at me.

Now, having stones thrown for one to run after is fine fun, but having stones flung *at* one is quite another thing; so I ran away, howling. My master strolled down the path, leaped a sunk fence which divided the garden from the fields, and began to walk more briskly. I put my head on one side to listen for a whistle or a word. As he did not call me, I darted after him as fast as I could go, without leave, for I was young and foolish, and thought that a dog could do as he liked.

As my head was full of this notion, I took no notice when my master turned round, and, in angry tones, again bade me go home. I just slunk a few steps back, only to follow him again when his back was turned. As soon as he noticed me, he shook his stick and threw a few more stones, but I dodged the stones and kept out of reach of the stick, and so we went on. At last we came to a field of white, woolly animals, such as I had never seen before; I was only a few months old, and knew but little of life. What were these things? Dogs? No, they seemed to be eating more grass than dogs usually consume. But whatever they were, they would prove better comrades, I thought, than an offended master. Besides, hurrah! there were young ones amongst them—skipping, jumping, dancing like mad! Off I flew, brimful of delight, to join the first playful creatures I had ever known, for I remembered nothing about my little brothers and sisters. I really could not turn back, though I heard my master's whistle, and also heard the voice of a strange man who had joined him trying to recall me.

I went on running till I dropped, and as I lay panting, with my tongue out, they both came up, my master shaking his stick. Then it began to dawn on me that I had done something much amiss in running after the flock of sheep and lambs.

I think I should have crept back to my master with an apology, only at that very moment one saucy, bold, mischievous little black-faced lamb singled himself out from the frightened flock, and walked bravely towards me, stamping his little hoofs on the ground as much as to say, 'Come on!' And I went. Oh, how we scoured about! How that lamb could run! What leaps he made! Round and round we tore in wider and wider circles, till we were at least half a mile from the rest, and sank down to get our breath and stare at one another, then up we started again, and off.

Our mad game had carried us out of sight; we were away on a wide common, and alone. Never before or since have I so enjoyed a frolic. It was my last hour of perfect freedom before learning that a dog is not born to do what he likes himself, but must bend his will to that of his master.

His master! Yes, bad or good, rich or poor, young or old, a dog's master is the most precious

thing he has. However unkind a man may be, or neglectful, or even cruel, a dog feels that it is far better to belong to him than to Nobody. Every dog not born and brought up in this faith is an outcast. I have been Nobody's dog myself, and ought to know.

(*Continued on page* 107.)

THE GOBLIN'S SEARCH.

SAID the Goblin to the Fairy: 'I'm as weary as can be,
I have travelled all the desert lands, the mountains and the sea.
I have searched the plains of Mexico; the dark Icelandic caves;
I have ridden o'er the coral reefs on Australasian waves;
I have peeped among the jungle-grass by Congo's swampy shore,
And forced a path through Guinea woods where no one went before;
And all the rest that I have had in this long search of mine
Was once among Siberian snow, and once in Argentine.'

'And tell me,' cried the Fairy, 'what inducements ever bribed
A Goblin to such labours as the work you have described?'

'Six weeks ago last Tuesday,' said the Goblin with a stare,
'I was sitting on the bottom rung of Willie Wilful's chair,
When, please you, my attention was attracted like a shot
By a little conversation that I heard upon the spot.
'How comes it,' said his mother, 'that you're late again to-day?
You know you told me, Willie, you would change your lazy way.'
'I think I must have been asleep,' said Willie with a yawn;
'You see, I lie awake all night, but fall asleep at dawn.'

'Then you've lost your resolution,' said his mother with a sigh,
You said that you would keep it, and I wanted you to try.'

I waited for no other word, but, slipping off the bar,
I started on the mighty search that carried me so far.
I looked in Willie's playbox (oh, it was in such a state),
I searched the playroom cupboard, and the chimney and the grate.
I peeped into the attic, and the cellar underground,
But of a resolution not a vestige could be found.
Then far from Willie's home I went, still searching day by day,
For surely I'm entitled to the things he throws away.
But all in vain, O Fairy, and I prithee tell me why
The resolution Willie lost is nowhere 'neath the sky?

The Fairy laughed: 'Such things,' said she, 'you ought to be aware,
When broken by a boy or girl, will vanish into air.
And so, unhappy Goblin, to your failure be resigned:
A broken resolution 'tis impossible to find.'

'Oh, that's it?' cried the Goblin. 'Well, I'm really very tired,
And don't think boys like Willie are the boys to be admired.
I feel I have been cheated, and shall tell the reason why
To his good master, Conscience, when I meet him by-and-by.'

PUSSY-CAT PLANTS.

MANY plants, both wild and garden flowers, have had names given them from animals; sometimes these are rather curious, and there is a difficulty in finding out the reason why they were given. The cat has not been passed by, and a number of plants are connected with her. The dog seems to have a larger number, but often in his case it is not a compliment to the plant called after him.

One of the speedwells, which in May or June is seen along our hedges with its blossoms of bright blue, is the cat's-eye; perhaps it may be a little like the eyes of some cats! Then there is the cat-mint, which flourishes on dry banks, and resembles other mints in having a strong smell, which is attractive to cats. The animals will bite the plant, scratch it, and roll over it. There is a quaint old saying about the cat-mint, which is as follows:—

'If you set it, the cats will eat it;
If you sow it, the cats won't know it.'

But this is a mistake.

The flowers of the small wild pansy, which have a variety of names, have been called cat's-faces, though the likeness is not remarkable. On Highland hills grows the mountain everlasting, or cat's-foot. The heads are white or rose-coloured, and the leaves woolly. In several English counties the children call the purple tops of the clover cat's-tails. The early blossoms of such shrubs as the hazel, birch, and willow, which we see swinging from the branches during the spring, are also sometimes called cat's-tails or catkins. A kind of auricula, from the shape of its leaf, has been known as cat's-ear, and one of the wild spurges, which exudes small drops of milky juice, is the cat's-milk plant.

HOW MANY FEATHERS HAS A HEN?

A POULTRY company lately offered a prize for the best guess as to the number of feathers on a hen. Thousands of guesses were received, some very far from the mark. One person guessed that a hen's feathers amounted to over six million! The correct number was found to be eight thousand one hundred and twenty.

'We feel a pardonable pride,' says the poultry company, 'in having contributed to science an item of information actually new.'

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 95.)

CHAPTER X.

THE story of Paul's conduct was duly reported, and caused a great sensation. Many things had lately happened to annoy the Tsar. The nation's demands for reform had, during the last few months, become a voice which rose louder and louder above the whispers of flattery and the false reports of certain Ministers anxious to maintain the existing state of affairs and to resist all change. 'Give us more freedom—more education—the opportunity to lead happier and brighter lives!' cried the Russian people. They cried louder and louder, and the Tsar had begun to hear their voice in spite of the attempts of interested persons to prevent him. But as yet he was opposed to those who represented the needs of the nation; he believed only that which was told him by his courtiers—he could not bear to hear of agitations and meetings of protest.

That an aristocrat—the son of a faithful servant of his own and of his father's Court—should take part with these revolutionary people was an unheard-of and unpardonable matter.

It was finally decided that the matter must be inquired into by the Minister of Justice. It had passed out of the Director's hands; if it proved to be exactly as he said, no allowance must be made for the fact that Paul's father was a faithful servant; on the contrary, it seemed the more unpardonable that the son of such a man should express publicly views so disgraceful and so unpatriotic.

The Director of the Lyceum departed satisfied. When the Countess called at the Palace, presently, to beg the Tsar's mercy for her son, the Emperor was busy with other matters; she could not see him.

'Tell her it is useless,' was the message the anxious mother received.

The Countess went on her knees before the Minister who gave her this reply, but his Excellency remained unmoved.

Poor Paul was allowed but a short breathing-space. He was 'tried' at once. His trial was not a fair one such as a culprit in England would receive, whatever his offence; it was what is called an 'administrative trial;' that is, his condemnation was settled beforehand, and the examination, such as it was, was made by the officials. Paul denied no part of his accusation, asked for no mercy, probably would have accepted none. He was accused and condemned almost in a breath, his sentence being 'deportation,' which means exile into Siberia and 'loss of civil rights.'

Paul congratulated his judges upon their unanimity. 'Your readiness to find as is obviously expected of you,' he said quietly, 'must be most agreeable to the Government. It must be so delightful to be judges under an autocratic Government; so simple, so easy; impossible, one might almost say, to make a mistake.'

Paul was hurried out of Court and away to his cell in the fortress, there to wait till a caravan of prisoners started for Siberia.

'What a tiger-cat!' remarked one of the judges; 'the country will be well rid of him.'

'With such a tongue he must in any case have come to a bad end,' said a second judge complacently.

The Countess Stirinof was, naturally, almost heart-broken. She had applied for permission to attend the trial, but had been refused. She went to this official and that, but could hear no news of her son. Applications at the fortress produced no result. The officials there could or would give no information. The Countess could only guess that her son had been convicted and sent to Siberia. She would never see her boy again, unless, indeed, she herself should abandon civilisation and settle down in Siberia; convicts might never return, for though an exile's sentence may be for but a term of two or three years, he may not return to Russia in Europe, but must live the rest of his life in Siberia, as farmer, shop-keeper, banker, or what he will. He may be joined by his friends and relations in Siberia, but from Siberia he can never hope to return.

The Countess took counsel with trusted friends. The very idea of a permanent separation from her son was terrible to contemplate. Her husband was dead; her little son, Mark, had long since disappeared, and now Paul was taken from her. Undoubtedly she must follow her boy; she was rich, she would buy an estate in Siberia and there await the expiration of his sentence—then Paul should join her.

But the poor mother gained little comfort from her friends.

'It is nonsense,' they said; 'do nothing of the sort, it is not necessary. Send a faithful servant to Siberia; give him plenty of money; let him find your son and bring him back, or take him to England.'

'You are mad,' said the poor Countess. 'How could such a thing be done?'

The old Baron Tuzof, who gave this advice, laughed. 'Is there anything that money will not do in Russia,' he said; 'always presuming that there is plenty of it? Have you a servant you can trust?'

The Countess considered a moment, then her face brightened. 'Yes,' she said, 'there is old Peter the huntsman; he is absolutely devoted to my dear Paul. I will send for Peter.'

Now Peter the huntsman is an old friend of ours, for this is the same man who played so important a part, many years before, in the loss of little Mark. A coward then, the man had remained a coward; he had never dared to tell the Countess the truth, so far as he knew it, about Mark's disappearance. Remorse and an uneasy conscience had caused him since that day many an hour of misery, and he had done his best—perhaps in the hope of atoning for his sin—to prove himself a faithful servant and a most devoted henchman and humble friend to young Paul, to whom he was deeply attached. When the Countess had said that he was absolutely devoted to her son, she knew that she had not exaggerated. Peter, she felt, could be trusted in this hour of distress and trouble. There was no servant in the establishment to whom this mission could so safely be entrusted as to old Peter; therefore, in the hour of trouble she thought of Peter and sent for him.

(*Continued on page* 110.)

"The Countess went on her knees before the Minister."

"Jack crept down step by step."

PEGGY'S LESSON.

WHEN Peggy Rutland went to stay at the seaside with her aunt and two schoolboy cousins, she found she was a person of much less importance than she had imagined.

At home she was admired and made much of as the only child, and all her friends happened to be younger than herself, so that she was easily first in games, and the leader in every fresh scheme of amusement.

Her father was beginning to realise she ought to be with older children for a time, to prevent her from growing too masterful.

'It won't hurt Peggy to learn to take a back seat,' he had said when the seaside visit was proposed, but Peggy had no intention of doing anything else than sit right in front.

This, however, she found was not quite so easy with her new friends as it had been at home. Her cousins, Jack and Edward, were older than herself, and, although they did not mean to be unkind, it never entered their heads that she could join in their amusements, or be anything of a companion to them.

'You nip off with Mother, Peg,' Edward said one day when she was clinging to them too persistently. 'We are going for a long walk round the cliff, and we want to start early.'

'Do take me!' she begged. 'I can walk quite as far as you boys.'

'Good old Peg!' said Jack with a laugh. 'She always thinks she can't be beaten by any one. My dear kiddy, go down on the sands and build castles with the youngsters.'

'I won't!' she cried in a temper. 'I shall follow you if you will not let me come with you, and then you will see I can walk just as far as any silly boy.'

'Now, Peggy, don't spoil sport,' said Edward. 'We can't have you hanging about and following us into dangerous places.'

'Cut away now, there's a good girl,' Jack broke in more kindly, as he saw Peggy's look of disappointment. 'If you will leave us alone now, we will take you out in a boat after tea.'

So Peggy left them with tears in her eyes and rage in her heart. How dared her cousins treat her as if she were a baby! She would pay them out in some way, and show them she was as good as they were.

Then she began to wonder where the boys were going. All at once she remembered having heard them speak of some caves along the coast, and of how they meant one day to try and scramble down the cliff and find an entrance to them. What fun it would be if she climbed from the beach and got there before them! She knew it was possible to reach half-way up the cliff, but they had never been able to get beyond, so that was the reason the boys wanted to explore from above.

Peggy started off at the top of her speed, for the way round by the beach would take longer than the cliff-path, and she wanted to get there before her cousins. She need not have hurried, if she had known, for Jack and Edward had rather a lengthy business to get through before they could begin to explore.

Some years before a wall had been built to keep people from this dangerous bit of cliff, and a windlass, which had lately been used to haul up buckets of fine sand from the beach, still stood there. Jack and Edward thought some of the rope would be a help to them, but it took them some time to get as much as they wanted, for the rope, though still good, was rather twisted and tangled.

The first part of Peggy's climb was quite easy, but when she left the lower rocks and sandstone, and reached some dry, burnt-up turf, she found it was very slippery, and had hard work to keep her foothold. She had no idea of the danger of the attempt she was making. Indeed, her mind was so full of not meaning to be beaten by those horrid 'superior' boys, that she was quite reckless about herself. On she went, pulling herself up by tufts of grass or anything that seemed firmly rooted, till at last she clutched the branch of a gnarled and stunted tree, not far from the top. Alas! it was rotten and brittle, and broke in her grasp, causing her to slip back several feet. It was at this moment she awoke to the danger of her position. She looked round; hitherto her eyes had been directed only upwards. To her horror, she saw the opening of the cave yawned close beside her, and her hold was so slight that she did not dare to move for fear of being hurled into its depths. Oh, how foolish she had been to think she could compete with boys who were practised cliff-climbers! She remembered her father's words: 'Peggy, dear child,' he had said, 'some day you will learn there are a few people cleverer and wiser than yourself.'

Well, she had certainly learnt it now, but it did not seem much use if she were not to be given any time to profit by it. A great sob rose in her throat as she wondered how long she would be able to hold on.

'Jack! Edward!' she called in despair, and then her heart stood still, for surely an answer came floating back to her.

'Who's calling?' were the welcome words, and then the boys looked over the wall at the top of the cliff, and realised at once their little cousin's deadly peril.

It was a mercy they had a rope, or they could never have rescued Peggy. Jack knotted it firmly round a stake, while Edward crept down step by step till he was near enough to fling it round the terrified girl. His arms were then free to drag Peggy out of her dangerous position, and soon he had her safe, though white and trembling, at the top of the cliff.

'Oh, don't scold me!' she sobbed. 'I will never, never again think I can do things as well as other people.'

So Peggy learned her lesson, and the boys were much too sorry for her to be anything but kind and comforting. Indeed, they afterwards became much better friends and companions, for, when Peggy knew there were limits to what she could do, she no longer bothered them with unreasonable wishes.

When she returned home, Father noticed just the improvement he had desired in his little girl.

'Was it very uncomfortable on the back seat, Peggy?' he asked, with a twinkle in his eye.

'At any rate it was safe,' she said, for she under-

stood what he meant. 'And once when I tried to keep in front, I nearly had a bad tumble.'

Then she told her father the whole story, and he was very thankful his little girl's recklessness had had no graver result.

PUZZLERS FOR WISE HEADS.

4.—Double Acrostic.

The initials and finals, read downwards, give the names of two well-known English watering-places.

Cross Words.

1. To exchange.
2. A grand sailing or rowing match.
3. Mohammedanism.
4. A square number.
5. To suspend.
6. A farinaceous food substance.
7. Ultimate purpose.
8. To ensnare.

R. M. B.

[*Answer on page* 146.]

Answer to Puzzle on Page 75.

3.—*Christmas Tree.*

1. C o o k
2. s H i p
3. g i R l
4. k i w I
5. f i S t
6. s T o p
7. M o o r
8. t A n k
9. d e S k
10. p a s T
11. t a R t
12. d E a r
13. E a s y

MONUMENTS TO ANIMALS.

In the Hôtel de Ville, of Luneberg, in Hanover, there is a mausoleum containing a costly glass structure. This encloses a ham, and is a monument to a pig! Upon a marble slab an inscription is engraved in golden letters: 'Passers-by! contemplate herein the mortal remains of the pig which won for itself imperishable glory by its discovery of the salt springs of Luneberg.'

On the village green of Somers, near New York, there stands a monument to an elephant. 'Old Bet' was probably the first elephant exhibited in America. She was taken across the Atlantic about a century ago, by a French showman. Crowds flocked to see her; but one unlucky day Bet broke loose during the show. There was a panic; somebody got a gun, and 'Old Bet' was shot. The showman had loved his elephant, and after her death he lost heart and gave up the business. He consoled himself by designing a monument to Bet. A single shaft of granite, fifteen feet high, rests on a triple case. At the top is a wooden image of the elephant. This, which is four feet in height, was at first gilded. When the gilt became tarnished, it was replaced by a more life-like coat of mouse-coloured paint.

NOBODY'S DOG.

(*Continued from page* 102.)

The evil that I suffered in consequence of my game with that lamb was great.

The lamb knew his way home to his mother and his field, and had been working his way round his own familiar pastures towards them while I was wheeling in a crazy manner around him, barking in the gruff, woolly tones of puppyhood and careless whither I wandered. At last we reached a short cut, well known to the crafty lamb, where a little bridge led across a clear, tinkling brook, at which he had been in the habit of quenching his thirst. I don't know how it happened: all I remember is that when, after a few hurried laps of water, I was crossing the narrow bridge with the lamb, we found ourselves trapped. The strange man who had followed us across country approached from one end of the bridge and grabbed the lamb, while I felt myself in the grasp of my master, who had come up silently from the other end. Whirling me aloft by the scruff of the neck, he held me powerless in the air with his left hand, while, with the right, he brandished the stick. Though I had never been beaten before, something made me tremble and shut my eyes. I heard the stick whistle through the air, the next moment I was twisting and writhing under a severe blow. Another fell, and another. I howled and cried, poor baby that I was, half in agony and half in surprise that such things could be. One look I cast into the human face close to mine, so near yet so far, the face of the fellow-creature so much above me, in whose power I was. It was white with rage. I read no pity in it for me, the smaller and weaker of the two. Again the stick was raised, when the voice of the other man said, as he caught my master's arm, 'No, sir, not again! It's only a pup. You'll hurt it, sir, you will indeed. Nothing spoils a young dog like harshness.'

'The brute must be taught not to run after sheep, mustn't he?' asked my master, turning on him roughly.

'Not that way, sir; and I will not stand by and see it done—that's more,' he added, loosing the sturdy black-faced lamb, and walking a step or two nearer, as if to prevent further violence towards me.

My master, setting his teeth together, swung me back, and, with one toss from his powerful right arm, sent me flying over the bridge into the stream, which, luckily for me, was shallow in that part, or, dazed as I was with pain and fright, I might never have reached the shore. As it was, I made for the bank.

'There, go and fish out your drowned dog, and teach him your own way; he's no good to me—a wretched mongrel, not fit to follow at a fellow's heels! Why couldn't the groom save the whole litter, and let me pick out the best?'

'The mother died, sir; she was but a poor, frail thing, and this was the only pup hardy enough to rear by hand. The groom did his best for it, sir. I saw it myself. It was pitiful to see the poor thing. These dumb things, sir, you call them brutes and mongrels, but they've got their feelings. At the last, when the mother was too weak to suckle it, she looked up in my face, and stretched one paw out

"Again the stick was raised."

across the puppy, trying to gather it up, as if she was loth to leave it. But did you mean, sir, that I might have the pup to keep?' he went on, seeing that my master was sauntering off with a sneering smile. 'My wife and children will be glad and proud——'

'All right—I meant it,' said the other, and went his disdainful way.

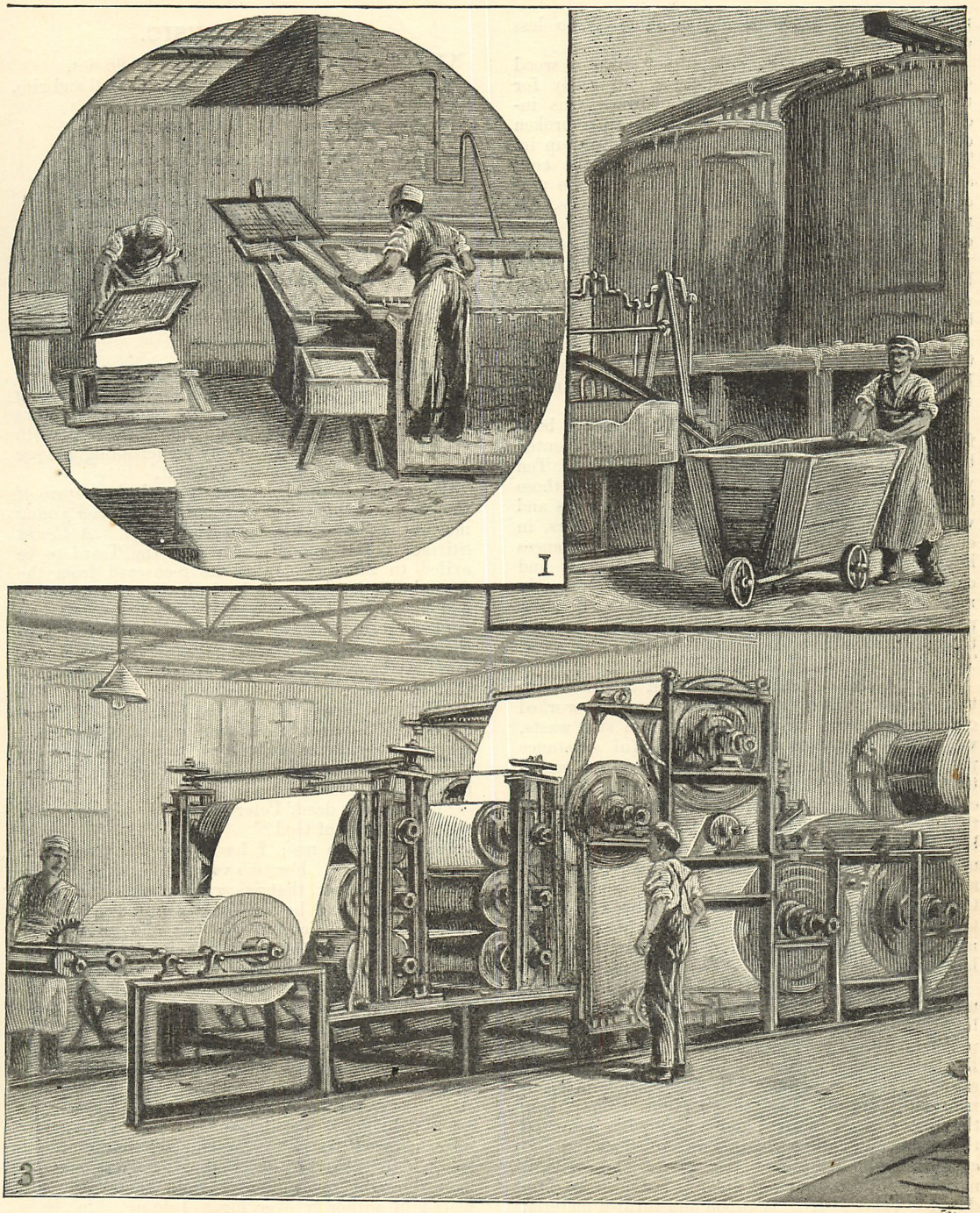
By this time I was beginning to ache grievously from the hard blows I had received. Sick and shivering, I dragged myself to my protector's side, and he gently took me in his arms, all wet and dripping as I was.

'I'll be a better master to you, though I am only a poor working man, than yonder fine gentleman,' said he, looking after the retreating figure. 'A true man you will never be,' he added, 'till you have been taught not to be such a coward as you have shown yourself this morning, Mr. Rupert Eversley.'

As I raised my wet, hairy nose to kiss him, I felt a new feeling in my heart. 'I do believe,' said I to myself, 'that there are only two things in life—that is, for a dog: somebody that cares for him, and somebody that he can care for. A man takes a dog, I don't know why, and the dog belongs to him; but there is no such thing as a dog's taking a man by himself. Unless the dog takes the man when the man takes the dog, they will never be real friends.'

While my new master carried me home under his coarse coat, white with the dust of the great stones which he had been cutting—for he was a mason by trade—I made up my mind, come what would, to take him for a master, and to be a good dog, to be faithful and honest, obedient and true, and to do my best to learn all he wished, no matter how hard it might be.

(*Continued on page* 117.)



1. Paper-making by Hand. 2. Pulp Vats in Paper-making Machine. 3. Paper-making by Machinery.

LITTLE GIANTS OF LABOUR.

IV.—THE PAPER-MAKER.

PERHAPS of all our little giants of labour, none can be said to do its work more thoroughly than the paper-maker. We have all heard of the cloth manufacturer who went to a meeting dressed in a coat which had been growing—in the form of wool—on a sheep's back when the sun rose that

morning. The paper-making machine is no less expeditious.

At one end, the soft, wet pulp of linen or wood enters, and rolls off at the other end ready for use. If enough pulp could be obtained, this industrious machine would turn it into an unbroken coil of paper long enough to wrap the world up in. Truth to tell, there need be no end to the coil, since there are no joints to be made. In the process, particularly at one end of the machine, the material has to be treated tenderly. The water is drawn from the pulp by air-suction as it passes over wire netting; the damp sheets are made to glide between rollers which still further squeeze out the water, after which it travels over rolls of felt or blanket, and finally, strong and dry, it is coiled upon a cylinder ready to be cut into sheets. Sometimes the cutting up is done as it comes from the machine. Fourteen miles of unbroken paper eighteen inches wide have been produced in this way.

And yet this mode of paper-making has not been followed very long. The machine was first invented by a Frenchman named Louis Robert, in 1798. Ten years later it began to produce paper. In those times the materials principally used were rags and various vegetable fibres. Of quite recent years, in order to make paper cheaper, many other substances have been employed, including esparto grass and chemically prepared wood pulp. The latter is now in most common use, but by no means makes the best paper, since time is sure to paint it yellow, even though it come from the machine as white as snow. The best paper is still often made by hand.

When a Chinese scholar sat down to his lessons two thousand two hundred years ago, he worked out his problems on paper made from silk waste, while the Egyptians used a wonderful substance produced from the pith of sedge plants pasted together in layers crossing and recrossing; it was called papyrus, and even to-day pieces of it are to be seen, a little torn at the edges, perhaps, but still plainly showing the characters marked upon them all those centuries ago. This will not be the case with some of *our* books when their pages have been turned over for as long a time. But when, instead of wood pulp, the paper is made of linen rags, we may feel more sure of it lasting.

The Chinese art did not find its way into Europe until the twelfth century. At that time, and for long after, parchment was generally used, and probably the first paper mill was not erected in England until the year in which Queen Elizabeth came to the throne (1558). In that year, John Spielman built one at Dartford, in Kent. Since then, they have become busier, and nothing has increased their work more than the advance in education. If *all* girls and boys are taught to read and write, it naturally follows that a deal of paper must be produced to print their books upon and furnish material for the exercise of their busy pens.

The model of the paper-making machine at the South Kensington Museum is one of the finest in the collection. It is also one of the largest; but the model, in spite of its size, is not nearly so big as the huge machine itself.

SILENT MUSIC.

WITHIN the shell the ocean's music lies,
The murmurs of the waves that fall and rise,
But only those who place it to the ear
Can catch the music that is slumbering there.

So in the human heart, unheard, unknown,
Lies sweetest music guessed by love alone,
And yours may be the joy to wake the strain
That, sounding once, may never cease again.

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 103.)

CHAPTER XI.

PETER came from the country house in response to a message from the Countess. 'The young Count is in terrible trouble,' she wrote. 'I desire you to prove your loyalty to our family, and to Count Paul in particular, by undertaking a long journey, therefore prepare yourself.'

When the faithful servant learned the nature of the trouble which had befallen his beloved young master, he bowed his head and wept. A Count Stirinof to fall into disgrace with the Tsar! to be exiled to Siberia! When he recovered from the first shock, however, he knelt before the Countess and kissed her hand.

'I am ready,' he said. 'Send me to the ends of the earth—where you will—only tell me how I may serve my beloved young master, whom I love more than if he were my own son.'

'My good Peter,' sobbed the Countess, 'I know it, and that is why I have sent for you. They have taken my boy, Peter, and refuse to give me news of him. Without such news I cannot exist. My husband is dead, Mark is dead.'

'Perhaps not dead,' Peter groaned; 'who knoweth the full mercies of God?'

'He is dead to me; I have only Paul, and him they have taken. For two years at least he will be an actual prisoner, that is certain; after that they will free him, and he will be permitted to live in Siberia under police supervision; he may never return to St. Petersburg, but I may go to him. The first thing is to be assured that he is well and kindly treated; this is what I wish you to discover; to follow him into Siberia; to live near at hand to the prison in which he is kept; to employ money, with which I shall take care that you are well supplied, in ensuring his comfort and the kindness of those who attend upon the convicts—alas! that I should be compelled to use such a word of my dear son! You know his high-spirited nature, and how unaccustomed he is to control and discipline. I tremble to think of the trouble he must already have brought upon himself from those who are placed in authority over him. I do not think he is well supplied with money; at the last I had no means of communicating with him; we parted almost without a farewell embrace'—the poor Countess paused and cried quietly for a while.

Peter was terribly affected by her sorrow, and by the miserable tale she had to tell him; would it, he

wondered, be any comfort to his beloved mistress to tell her the truth, as far as he knew it, about little Mark's fate; that he had not in reality been eaten by any wild beast, but had simply been stolen from the hut in which he had been placed, and might possibly even now be traced.

But Peter was still a coward in this matter, as he had been a coward from the first; he dared not speak; he persuaded himself that at this crisis the knowledge that he had deceived her as to her little son would be no comfort to the mother, but perhaps even an added sorrow; he would leave it a little while; before he died she should know all that he had to tell; at any rate he would not descend into the grave with his soul burdened with this deception—a deception of nearly fourteen years' standing.

'You will follow the route of the convict gangs,' the Countess continued presently, 'inquiring for news of him at each convict office and resting-place that you reach. They will give you information in return for money; you will hear of him; even though he should not already have made himself conspicuous among his fellows, a Count Stirinof can scarcely travel in a gang of convicts without exciting remark among those who register the names of the exiles as they pass through the various penal settlements and rest-houses. You will find him easily enough, and, having found him, you will inform me instantly of his welfare. Convicts may be followed by their friends; it may be that once he is settled at Irkutsk or elsewhere, I shall travel myself into Siberia and settle also close to my dear son.'

'Madam, if money can do all that you say, can it not also procure the escape of a prisoner?' said Peter.

The Countess held up her hands in consternation. 'Heaven forbid that you should attempt anything which may endanger his life, Peter! Remember that I now have none but him; I have only Paul. Do nothing which might deprive me of this my one hope. Promise, Peter, or——'

'Madam, how can I?' groaned the old servant. 'You know Count Paul and his masterful spirit! What is done must depend upon him, not upon me!'

'At any rate promise that you will repeat to him my words—my entreaty that he will do nothing rash to endanger his safety; remind him constantly that he is my all.'

Peter promised, and the Countess parted with him upon this understanding, that all which could be done by money towards bettering Paul's condition as a convict should be done, but that he would set his face against attempts to escape, unless, indeed, circumstances forced him to help the young Count in any such enterprise. He might possibly be in the hands of wicked persons, who rendered life so intolerable to the convicts that the risks of escape would be preferable to such constant misery; or Paul might insist upon some course of action of which Peter did not approve, 'and in that case,' Peter said, 'what can any one do? My young master will have his way whether I protest, or you protest, or any one protests!'

The Countess could not help smiling.

'I know my dear boy is wilful and headstrong,' she sighed. 'We will hope for the best, Peter; I shall trust in Heaven's mercy.'

As the Countess expected, Peter was not very long in coming upon the track of young Count Paul.

Though the authorities in St. Petersburg had been unable, by reason of special instructions from the highest quarters, to give any information as to Paul's sentence and destination, it was a different matter when subordinate officials in the provinces were approached. These smaller men were generally delighted to earn a little money at any moment. They had no particular reason to withhold information or to give it. The lists of convicts were easily reached down from the file where they were hung. If any one happened to come along who desired information and was ready to pay for it, it was a simple matter to sell the commodity, as simple as for a grocer to hand a pound of tea over the counter, or for a baker to sell a roll to a customer in exchange for the modest coin which is its equivalent.

'Who are you that speak?' asked the clerk at the first penal establishment at which Peter was able to make inquiries—a small town close to the Ural mountains, on the near side of Siberia.

'An old servant who follows his master in order to secure for him such comforts as money can buy,' said Peter.

'Money, ah! Provided by his relations, doubtless?'

'Certainly none of my own,' laughed Peter. 'I am a peasant.'

'So I guessed from your appearance, even though you are dressed above your station. Well, as to the money, now; is there plenty of it?'

'A moderate supply; not enough to waste.'

'I see. And you desire to know whether Count Paul—what is it?—Count Paul——'

'Stirinof.'

'Ah, yes, Stirinof—a Count a convict, dear, dear!—whether he has passed through here on his way eastward. What would the information be worth to you, now?'

'Twenty-five roubles,' said Peter, mentioning a sum equal to two pounds ten.

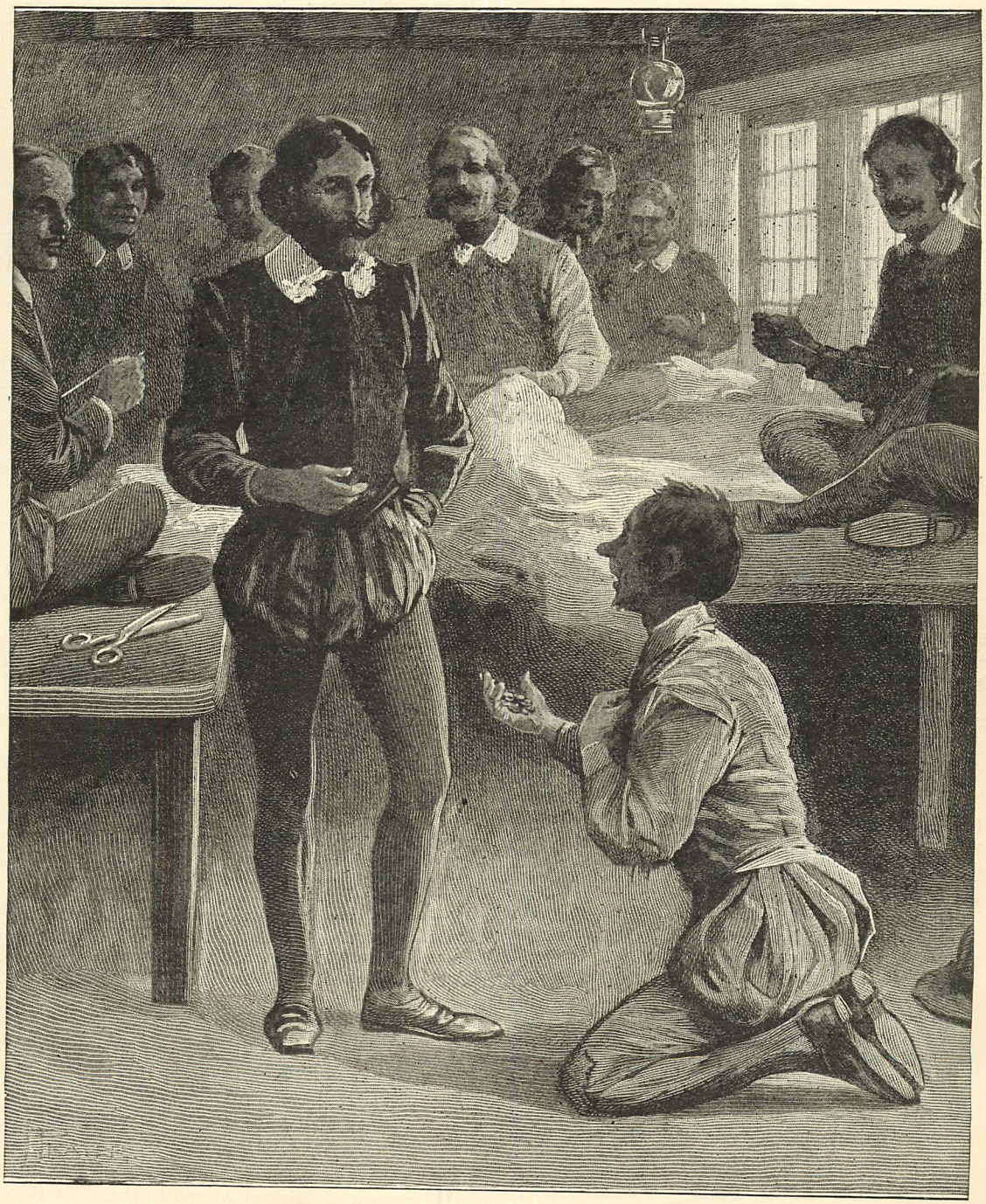
'Oh, oh! See what a heavy file I should have to lift down, and how many papers to look through! Half a day's work! Say fifty roubles!'

Peter paid over the five pounds demanded. The clerk or official busied himself for a few minutes over the papers.

'The Count Paul Stirinof, convict,' he read out presently, 'passed through this station—where he was delayed with his gang for three days for want of railway trucks, all of which were required for military purposes—on April the 14th. This is the 20th—six days ago, my friend. Captain of the gang, Lieutenant Grozny—something of a Tartar, I know the man. Destination, Irkutsk, Alexandrofsky prison. I congratulate you; your fifty roubles have brought you in a harvest of news!'

(*Continued on page* 118.)

"Peter kissed her hand."



"'You nine tailors have made a man of me.'"

THE NINE TAILORS.

PERHAPS you have sometimes heard people say, 'Nine tailors make a man.' This ancient adage is said to have had its origin as follows:—

Nine tailors were merrily stitching when a poor beggar passed their shop, imploring charity of the busy workers. Straightway those kind tailors opened a subscription list. Each contributed something, and the money thus collected, which amounted to a very respectable sum, was handed over to the beggar. The poor fellow, full of gratitude, fell upon his knees. 'You nine tailors,' he exclaimed, 'have made a man of me!'

This story deserves to be known, for it certainly redounds to the credit of tailors.

HEROES OF DUTY.

IV.—THE REV. GEORGE GARNISH.

IT is sad to think how often the pleasant places through which the river Thames flows have been the scenes of accidents and loss of life; but when we read these terrible stories, a light is frequently thrown against the shadow by some act of devotion and heroism. Such can be found in an event that occurred on January 7th, 1885.

The Rev. George Garnish, a young clergyman of about twenty-four years of age, was, with some friends, enjoying a row on the river near Putney, when his craft suddenly collided with a smaller boat. In a moment, under the force of the blow, the second boat heeled over, and the five people it carried were thrown into the water. Fortunately four of them were able to swim, and these, with some difficulty, were rescued in a state of great exhaustion, due partly to the extreme coldness of the water. But the fifth, now beyond the reach of those in the boat, could do nothing to save himself, and it was only too plain that he was in immediate peril of drowning. At that moment Mr. Garnish, throwing off his coat, dived into the icy water and swam boldly out, calling words of encouragement to the sinking man. Alas! since the beginning of the awful scene too many minutes had elapsed, and when the rescuer came he was gripped by hands that were governed only by fear. His efforts to loosen them, that he might give the help that he came to give, were vain, and those in the boat and on the shore were horrified to see the rescuer sink with the man he had sought to save.

Other boats were now being rowed to the scene of the disaster, and all possible means were taken to effect a rescue, but in vain.

The water flows quietly over the place where the two men sank, but, though the river carries no memorial of the sad event, the deed by which George Garnish gave his life will not be forgotten.

THE BEE AND THE BUTTERFLY.

'IF I were you I'd do some work,' a Bee remarked one day
To a Butterfly that through a garden heedless made its way;

'Just look at me and notice how industrious I am,
How much I've even done since you into the garden came.
All up and down the beds I've been, and rifled every flower,
So many hours I've spent that way, and shall spend many more;
I've carried honey to the hive and stored it in the comb,
Then back again to get some more with speed I soon have come.

'But as for Butterflies, a lazy, thriftless life you lead;
What better is the world for you and all your silly breed?
So many flowers you light upon, and never seem to know
The sweetness that is stored in them, for off again you go.
A poet sang about me once, and how I honey store:
"How doth the little Bee," he said, "improve each shining hour?"
But who would sing about a Butterfly, I'd like to know,
That unimproving through the world each sunny day doth go?'

'I think you're rather hard on me,' the Butterfly replied,
And of yourself have good conceit—I'd not have so much pride;
Had I been born like you, a Bee, I would have worked like you,
Nor said so much about it as *you* seem inclined to do.
But I was made a Butterfly—a bright and shining thing,
And only meant to fly about for ever on the wing;
The little children love to see me flying all about,
And follow me hour after hour with many a merry shout.

'And poets, too, have sung of me and the sweet life I live,
And how much men might learn of me not to have care, and grieve:
One said that Butterflies that in the sunlight come and go
Were like a thought most beautiful that moveth to and fro.
So go your way, and store your honey, busy Mr. Bee,
And do not spoil your industry by being unjust to me;
Remember this, that had you been no Bee, but Butterfly,
You'd wing your way through garden-beds, and live and do as I.'

TRIFLES WHICH MAKE PERFECTION.

MANY of us have heard or read that famous remark of Michael Angelo to the effect that perfection is made up of trifles, and that perfection is no trifle. Audubon, the man who had such a wonderful knowledge of birds, was another believer in this doctrine.

One day a young artist called upon Audubon to show him some drawings and paintings.

'I like this very much,' said Audubon, examining one of the pictures, 'but it is deficient. You have painted the legs of that bird nicely except in one respect. The scales are exact in shape and colour, but they are not arranged correctly as to number.'

'I never thought of that,' said the visitor.

'Very likely,' said Audubon. 'Now, upon the upper ridge of the partridge's leg there are just so many scales. You have too many. Examine the legs of a thousand partridges, and you will find the scales the same in number in all of them.'

Thus it was that Audubon became wise—by the patient study of little things.

SOME OF NATURE'S MARVELS.

IV.—SOME NEAR RELATIVES OF THE CRABS.

I HAVE no doubt but that many readers of *Chatterbox*, when spending their summer holidays by the sea, have from time to time watched jelly-fish lazily floating by, expanding and contracting in that odd way they have, and have found an unfailing source of pleasure in watching crabs and shrimps, small fishes and other creatures moving about in the still waters of some pool, or when out at sea have taken a similar interest in the various living things of which glimpses, at least, are to be obtained. Yet few, if any, of you, I expect, have ever suspected that, besides these creatures, the water was teeming with other living animals. Many of them could certainly only be seen with the strongest microscopes, while others could easily be laid on a pin's head. A bottle of water taken from the surface of the sea on a fine warm day, and examined with a pocket magnifying-glass, would prove to contain swarms of such tiny creatures. Among them would be found a number of little organisms swimming with jerky movements up and down the bottle, now rising, now falling. These are tiny crustacea known as Copepods, humble relatives of the great crabs and lobsters, prawns and shrimps.

But you will the more easily understand what follows if you go to the nearest pond and capture some of the fresh-water relatives of these tiny inhabitants of the open sea. A fortunate dip may bring you, at least, three different kinds of these wonderful creatures—the Water Flea, the Cypris, and the Cyclops.

Let us take the Cyclops first. This little animal will be recognised at once. It has a long, tapering body, made up of a series of rings, after the fashion of a lobster (but without the great head-shield), one red eye in the middle of the head, a pair of antennæ, looking like a slender pair of horns, and, generally, a pair of egg-bags, one on each side of the tail. Fig. 1 should help you to find him at once.

The Water Flea has a more elaborate structure—too elaborate to explain here at length. Suffice to say, his body is encased in a shell which opens at the front, a little like the gaping shell of a mussel, while he swims, or rather rows himself, by means of a pair of branching arms, which are really antennæ specially modified to perform this work. If you are so fortunate as to possess a microscope of moderately high power, you will be able to see, through the transparent shell, the beating of the heart and the incessant movement of little hairy legs, which, by their rhythmical beating, or rather kicking, bring constant currents of fresh water for breathing purposes. In some specimens you will see, in a tiny chamber at the back of the animal, a number of eggs, which, in a very short time, will become water fleas, much as hen's eggs become chicks! The portrait of a captive water flea, as seen under the microscope, is shown in fig. 2.

The Cypris departs still further from the normal form of crustacean, having the whole body enclosed within the shell, with no visible head, as may be seen in fig. 3.

In some parts of the sea, both in the tropics and temperate seas, these tiny creatures swarm in such abundance that the water is coloured by them; they are in such myriads that, small though they be, shoals of fish, such as herring and mackerel, cuttle-fish and jelly-fish, swallow them greedily. The colouring of the water just referred to is due to the fact that the bodies of many species contain little globules of oil, coloured bright red or blue, as the case may be, while the egg-bags are often no less gaily coloured, sometimes bright green, sometimes red or blue. These little oil-drops serve to buoy up the body, and so reduce the labour of swimming; thus they carry within them a kind of lifebuoy.

But there are some other species which have adopted a quite different method of keeping themselves afloat. If you watch one of the fresh-water kind you will see that it gives several strokes with its long antennæ, and then pauses, suspended for a few seconds; then follows another series of strokes, and so on. But during each pause the body slowly sinks, though, with a few strokes, the original position is soon regained.

Now, the less it sinks during each pause, the less energy will be required to bring the body up to its former level, and thus every device which reduces the waste of energy is of advantage to the animal—it takes longer to get tired. A very simple experiment will show you that a body which presents a large surface to the water sinks more slowly than a body of the same weight, but round and compact in shape. Take two pieces of silver paper of equal size, roll one up tightly into a ball, and leave the other a flat sheet. Now drop each gently into the water, and let them sink, when you will find that the flat sheet takes far longer to reach the bottom.

This principle of the flat sheet has been adopted by many of these tiny crustacea, and more especially by those which live entirely at or near the surface of the open sea. These have developed enormously long antennæ and long, branched limbs, terminating in rows of minute spines, set so closely together that they look like feathers. A reference to figs. 4 and 5 will show you at a glance what a marvellously beautiful contrivance this is. Yet much of this beauty is lost in the illustration, since the colours are wanting. You shall seek far and long before you find anything more wonderful than these tiny

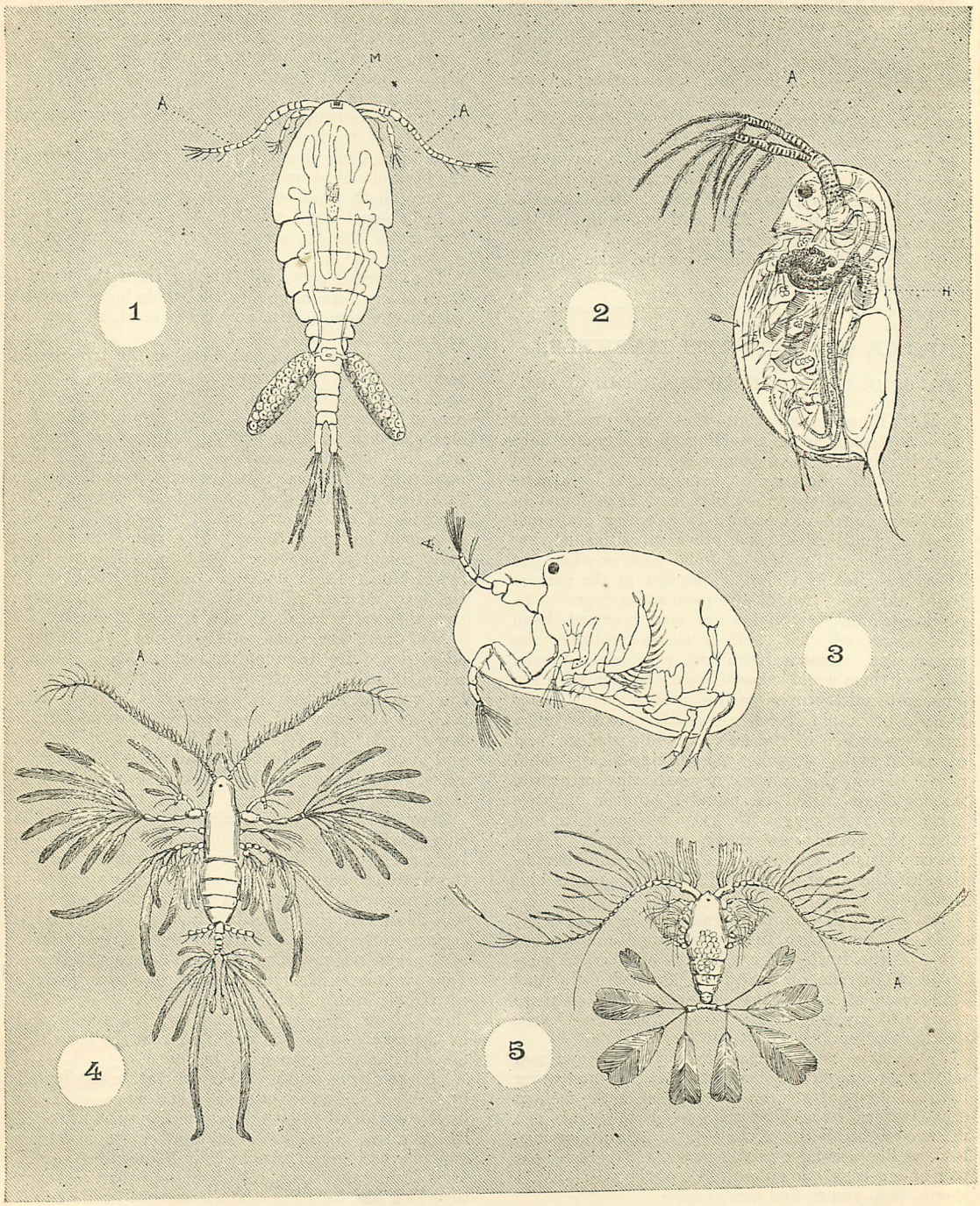


Fig. 1.—Cyclops: A, antennæ; M, eye.
Fig. 2.—Water-flea: A, antennæ, used as swimming organs; H, heart. The arrow shows a spot where the transparent shell gapes open.
Fig. 3.—Cypris, with transparent shell.
Figs. 4 and 5.—Two relatives of the Cyclops, with wonderful swimming organs.

creatures, which are shown here as they appear when highly magnified.

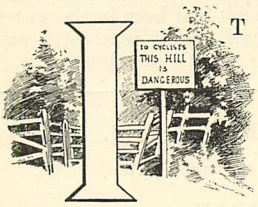
But these little Copepods are remarkable in yet another way. Many have the power to produce a bright blue star-like light, which shines for a time, and then goes out quite suddenly. Professor Hickson has described how, in the Malay Archipelago, these bright lights may be seen, on calm mornings, sparkling on the surface of the water just before sunrise; then, as the day dawns, one after another puts out its lamp and slowly sinks, to avoid the glare of the sun and the heat of the water.

W. P. Pycraft, F.Z.S., A.L.S.

NOBODY'S DOG.

(*Continued from page* 108.)

CHAPTER II.



IT was a long walk from Colonel Eversley's, where I had been born, to my new master's cottage. The road went winding along for miles, under shady trees, between green meadows, over level country called 'The Flat Crofts.' The ground lay very high—a plain on the top of steep hills.

I soon found my young legs cramped, and gave a little restless whine.

'Do you want a run?' said my master, whose name was Luke Bramble, setting me kindly down.

I looked up to say 'Yes,' and as we went along he began teaching me very gently how to follow close at his heels, and to make me understand that I must not scamper wildly after lambs, fowls, pigs, geese, or other creatures that we met. Since I had given myself to him, and only wanted to do what pleased him, I learnt quickly and easily. Soon I hit on the right plan. If I wanted to run, or bark, or do anything very much indeed, I went a little way in front and began to do it, and then turned round and stopped, lifting one paw and looking hard into his face to ask, 'Is this right?' It seemed a good idea, and he was sensible enough to know what I meant. I never once lost sight of him, for if I was ever tempted to run too far or too fast, he would whistle a call, and didn't I come tearing back to jump on him! After about an hour's pleasant walking, we came to a place which seemed to be the end of the flat country, and found ourselves at the top of a hill, so steep and sudden that a pair of great white horses dragging a cart up it were hardly able to pull their load.

Just where this road joined ours, a sign-post stood, and on this was painted in large letters the words: 'To Cyclists—this hill is dangerous.'

Not far from the post stood a large, comfortable-looking house, and outside it was a bench on which some men sat, drinking something out of tin cans.

'Hullo, Frank!' shouted my master to a carter, who, hot and dusty, tramped behind two splendid horses, patting them as they toiled sturdily up.

'Hullo, Luke!' answered the carter.

Now, I don't know what 'hullo' means to a man, but I think it must mean much the same as 'bow-wow' does to a dog; they seem to say it so often when they meet.

'Going home, Frank?' went on my master, as the other, reaching the top, stood to let the steaming horses rest. '*Straight* home? Come, Frank! not the "Hand-in-Glove" this afternoon; tea will be ready by the time you've put the horses up.'

Frank drew his hand across his mouth, and glanced longingly at the cool shade where they sat outside the house known by that name, but obeyed like a child when Luke Bramble laid his great hand on his shoulder. 'Come in, Frank, after you've been to the stables, and go there straight now, there's a good fellow. Martha will have the kettle on, and will give us a drink of something wholesome that won't put money into old Moody's pocket.'

'Why, what dog is that you've got?' said Frank to Luke. 'Haven't I seen that pup before, when I carted cider up to the Court for the kitchen?'

'Very likely,' said Luke; 'he was reared for young Mr. Rupert, whom his father and mother think so much of, but he didn't favour the pup when he

"A woman came to a little garden gate."

saw it—lost his temper with the poor young thing—so he fell to my share.'

'Ah! Mr. Rupert's a bad master enough to his horses, too,' said Frank. 'I did hear that the Colonel was wild about the way he used a young mare—took the mare away, and said he was fit to ride nothing but a bike, that couldn't feel. He goes about now on one of those puffing things, and pretends he likes it. I don't believe that he will come to any good.

Those who begin by ill-treating animals end, as a rule, by ill-treating men. He'll make nothing of an officer, if ever he gets soldiers under him.'

'I hear he boasts of getting high up in the Army.'

Just then a woman came to a little garden-gate a few paces off and called the men. She had a smiling face, so exactly like that on Frank's shoulders that I really thought that she must be a second Frank in petticoats. 'Come in, Luke. Make haste and come in, Frank; tea is ready,' she said.

(*Continued on page* 125.)

DREAM PLANTS.

STRANGE indeed were some of the superstitious fancies people had about plants in the olden time. We often wonder how they got them at first, but they were passed on from age to age, and they have not all vanished now. Some of these fancies were harmless, others might be dangerous. One was that particular plants had the power of producing dreams of a special sort. Of course, many plants, if eaten, will cause dreams; you very likely get unpleasant dreams, or even pleasant ones, from a simple vegetable, supposing that you eat a quantity of it; but the mistaken part of this idea was that a plant could give you a dream you wished for. To eat the plant was not necessary in many instances, so they said; people only had to carry about a bit of it, or take some to bed with them at night.

The elm-tree has been supposed to produce dreams when some of its leaves were put under the head; we know not why, except that it was considered a sacred tree. Holly also gave good dreams—sometimes when a bunch of the leaves were placed on the chest at night. To obtain a dream about somebody they were fond of, people were told to dig up roots of the daisy, or the wild plantain, and sleep upon them. Another plant that was thought to be of great value as a medicine, had also the repute of giving dreams that were wished for; this was the yarrow-root or millefort. Again, there were particular days when flowers had a dream-power, such as Midsummer Day. Sometimes a variety of flowers were collected with this object; in Sweden they selected nine kinds, so that if some failed, others might be effectual.

Then if people dreamt of plants or flowers—a thing which may happen to any of us, young or old—such a dream might have a curious meaning. Good fortune, it was thought, came from dreaming of a rose, a lily, a palm, a laurel, and others. Amongst the evil ones were the plum, elder, and cypress.

Should you dream about brambles and pass through them unhurt, you were supposed to be able to conquer difficulties; but should you seem to be pricked, you would have great losses. To dream of cutting up cabbage was held to foretell jealousy. It was said to be a good thing to see garlic in a dream, for this was a sign that the person would find hidden treasure. We might think a dream about thistles was unfavourable, but we are told it is the other way, for it meant that you would soon have pleasing news. Clover, if it came into the dream, was a token of health and happiness.

COOKED IN THE THAMES.

A True Anecdote.

IN the year 1700 a very curious wager was made by a man named James Austin. He had asserted that he could boil a pudding in the Thames. Some of his friends or acquaintances very naturally believed that such a feat was quite impossible. Their differences of opinion ended, as such differences usually did in those days, in a heavy wager being made. Strange as it may appear, Austin won the bet without any trickery or subterfuge. How was it done?

The operation was, after all, very simple, and was carried out at little cost. Austin enclosed his pudding in a large tin pan, and this he placed in a sack of quicklime. The sack was lowered ten feet down into the waters of the Thames near Rotherhithe. The water slacked the quicklime, which gave out sufficient heat to cook the pudding in the pan. The pudding was taken up after it had been in the water about two hours and a half, and it was eaten and enjoyed, being, if anything, a little overdone.

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 111.)

CHAPTER XII.

THE great prison at Irkutsk was terribly full at this time. In addition to the stream of soldiers flowing from Russia into Manchuria, the hard-worked Siberian railway was called upon to carry an unusually large number of exiles, for discontent walked abroad among the Russian people, and there had been much clamour for reforms of all kinds, and, in consequence, an increased number of political convicts were sent into Siberia.

Thus the Governor of the convict prison at Irkutsk found it necessary to telegraph back to the governors of other prisons between Irkutsk and the Urals to send forward no further gangs of prisoners to his care, for the reason that he had no more accommodation at his disposal; his big prison was full up. Among the governors thus invited to retain parties of convicts until their establishments should be filled up also was the chief of Yermatsky prison, who was thus compelled to make arrangements to take in several gangs arriving in rapid succession—to convert his prison, in fact, from a mere halting-place into a permanent house of detention.

With his gang of companions in misfortune there arrived one day at Yermatsky Count Paul Stirinof, who, it need scarely be said, was by this time one of the leaders of the party of which he was a member; indeed, he was the acknowledged hero of the gang, the most admired, envied, feared, liked, and hated, according to the character of those with whom he had to deal. The soldiers of the escort had grown fond of him, chiefly because he would stand no browbeating from their officer, who took no pains to be civil to them, and whom they hated in consequence. The man was a bully, and his treatment of the convicts was so clearly against the known rules that the good-hearted soldiers were inclined

to question his authority from time to time, in fear lest they should be condemned with him in case of an inquiry, which Paul had several times declared that he would demand at the first opportunity.

This captain of the convict escort, Lieutenant Grozny, hated Paul because, besides thus threatening to report him, he had more than once 'scored off' him with his ready tongue in a manner to raise a laugh at his expense. The convicts admired their aristocratic companion because, throughout the long journey into Siberia, Paul had been the life and soul of the little party, doing his best to lighten the hardships of all.

On one particular day a serious quarrel took place between convict Paul and officer Grozny. A certain convict had been most unjustly condemned to the knout, and Paul declared that the flogging should not take place. If Grozny dared carry out the threatened sentence, said Paul, he, Count Paul Stirinof, would report the matter, and see that a true version of the affair reached the authorities at home.

'I have powerful friends and connections in St. Petersburg,' said Paul, 'and I shall see that justice is done. The man does not deserve flogging; you know it, Grozny—so do your soldiers, so does every convict present.'

Grozny was furious. The soldiers stood round the condemned man, waiting for the outcome of Paul's threat. They knew very well, as Paul had said, that Grozny's action was illegal.

'Obey your orders!' cried the lieutenant. 'Do not listen to the nonsense spoken by a helpless convict. *Bey yevó*, beat him!—twenty strokes—I will count—prepare!'

But the soldiers, to Grozny's indignation, refused to use their whips. They consulted; then one spoke.

'We are faithful servants of the Tsar,' he said, 'and will safeguard the prisoners. In this matter the prisoner, Count Stirinof, is right. The condemned convict only asked that his wife, who is ill, might ride upon the baggage-cart; that is not a flogging matter—the woman is certainly ill. The Tsar is merciful, and has made merciful laws.'

'That is my business, not yours!' Grozny roared. 'If you dare to disobey my authority I shall take the knout in my own hand. I shall beat this man first, then each of you who are mutinous; and, lastly, this young fool Stirinof, whom I shall flog until he cries for mercy.'

The men still hesitated. Paul laughed aloud.

'Perhaps these good fellows will submit to be flogged,' he said, standing boldly forward, 'but I promise you, Mr. Lieutenant, that I will not, and that you will do better not to attempt to touch me. As for your men, they know as well as I do, and as you do, that a word from them would produce an inquiry into your actions, which are illegal.'

The lieutenant produced a revolver. He raised it slowly, and pointed it at Paul. All the world—the little world of the convict-gang and their guards—held their breath in suspense.

'You scoundrel!' said Grozny furiously, 'have you not the wit to discover where the power lies? You make a show of standing bravely to meet the death which you deserve, and which I shall perhaps inflict upon you in a moment or two; but before the fatal moment arrives we shall see you upon your knees, begging for mercy.'

Paul laughed again, louder than ever.

'I have the wit to discover,' said he, 'that, for more than one reason, you dare not act up to your boast: one is, that you know very well you have no right to shoot, and that to do so would be your ruin; another is that you are a coward, and when I tell you that one of your own soldiers, behind there, has covered you with his pistol, and that when you pull the trigger he will pull his——'

Grozny turned quickly with an exclamation of fear. 'Who? where?' he muttered, his face growing as white as milk.

In a moment Paul had sprung upon him and wrested the revolver out of his hand. With a jerk of the elbow, he threw it into the midst of a dense clump of brushwood growing near the spot in which the scene had been enacted. A sound—half gasp, half cheer—rose from the lips of all present. The whole thing was done in one second of time. Grozny stood pale and furious, Paul calm and even smiling. The soldiers looked somewhat disconcerted, not quite certain how they ought to act under the circumstances. Of the convicts, some looked scared, some concealed delighted smiles, some held their breath to listen and watch. What would happen now?

'You see,' said Paul, 'how easily you were frightened and surprised into losing your weapon. It was a trick. No soldier threatened you—the good fellows would not dream of doing so: they would neither shoot you nor me—why should they?—neither would they flog an innocent prisoner. I could have kept your revolver, or shot you with it, Lieutenant Grozny; but you are welcome to have the weapon again.'

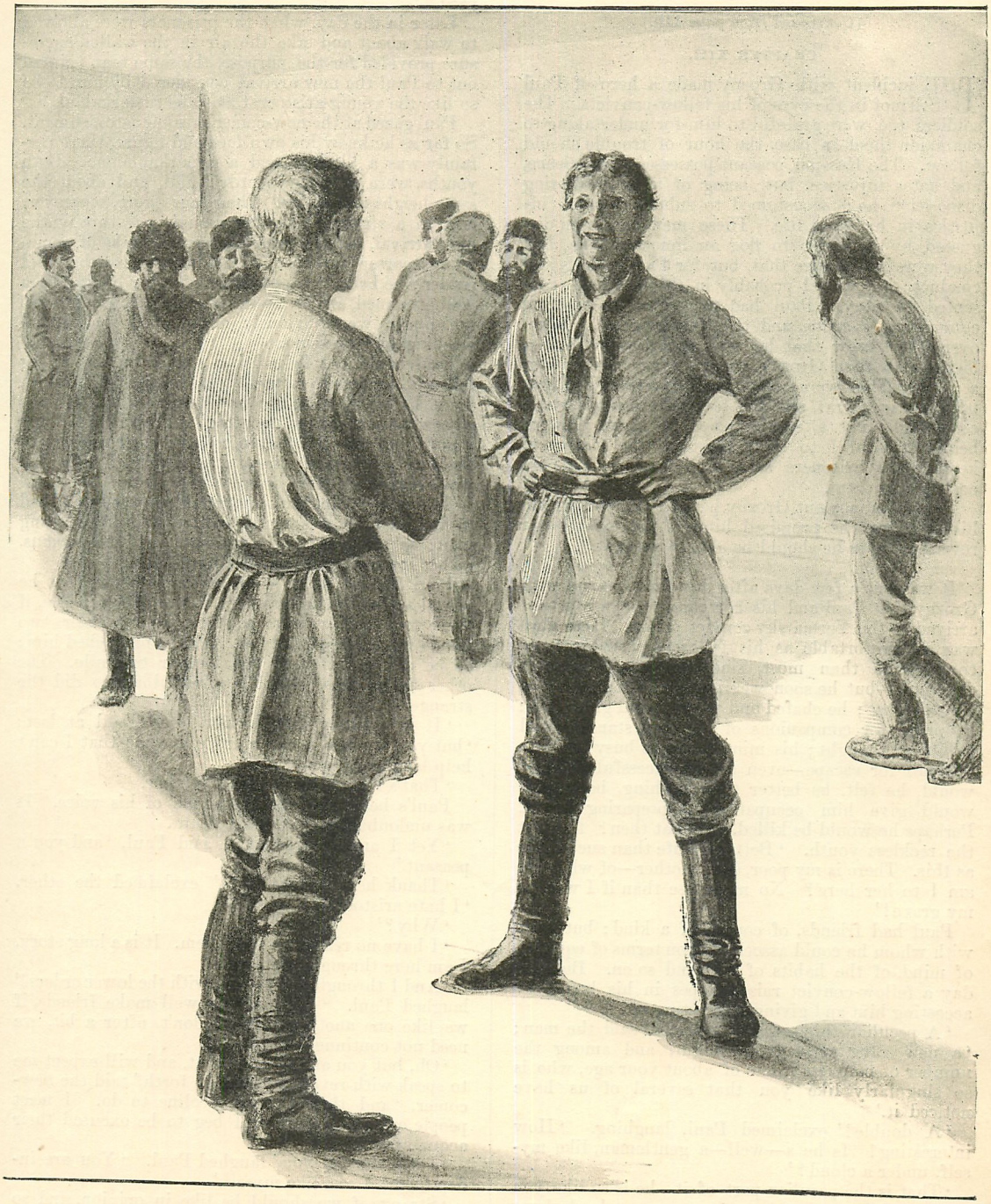
'This is mutiny!' gasped the officer. 'You—you shall be reported and punished. You have probably bribed these men, and made mutineers of them also. All this shall be reported against you and them.'

'But, good Mr. Officer,' replied Paul, 'I was foolish enough to come away with very little money. I have bribed no one, and cannot afford to do so. All these convicts, as well as I, are witnesses that these soldiers have done nothing wrong; they have done their best to prevent you from committing a crime. You yourself, in a calmer moment, will reflect that to flog this man because his wife is too ill to walk, and the railway authorities can afford us no accommodation, would have been a terrible injustice and a crime which must have sat upon your conscience life-long. As for mutiny, these good fellows are on your side except where the laws are broken or threatened.'

The officer said no more. He signed for a soldier to fetch his revolver, but took no further steps with regard to the flogging of the condemned convict. He stood with scowling face as the gang moved onwards upon its way, favouring Paul with a specially black look as he marched by. Then he took his seat in the comfortable trap which was provided for him, and followed the gang.

(*Continued on page* 122.)

"Grozny turned quickly. In a moment Paul had sprung upon him."



"You are really so absurdly like me."

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 119.)

CHAPTER XIII.

THE incident with Grozny made a hero of Paul Stirinof in the eyes of his fellow-convicts. The soldiers, too, were grateful to him for undertaking to champion them in case the hour of trouble should follow. The Russian peasant possesses a conscience, and hates injustice, but, being of a long-suffering disposition, he is accustomed to submit to much injustice in his own life. These men had been disgusted by the order to flog an innocent man, and they were well aware that, but for Paul's words and conduct, they would probably in the end have consented to obey. Paul had prevented them from committing a crime, and they felt grateful. Moreover, they knew that he was an aristocrat, and a bigger man than Grozny, though temporarily under a cloud. They were accustomed to respect and look up to an aristocrat, and the fact that this one was a convict did not alter the point of view. As for being unfaithful to their trust, in the matter of keeping the prisoners safe, such a thing had not occurred to them.

From this moment Grozny hated Paul, and within his own soul he promised himself the most bitter revenge if ever he should be able to exact it.

It was but a few days after his final quarrel with Grozny that Paul and his companions in misfortune arrived at the Yermatsky convict prison. Here Paul was as comfortable as his fellows—probably more comfortable than most, since he was a popular character—but he soon wearied of the monotony of his existence; he chafed and worried and grew thin; he pined for companions of his own standing and habits of thought; his mind began to busy itself in schemes for escape—even an unsuccessful attempt would, he felt, be better than nothing, because it would give him occupation in preparing for it. Perhaps he would be killed. 'What then?' thought the reckless youth. 'Better no life than such a life as this. There is my poor, dear mother—of what use am I to her here? No more use than if I were in my grave!'

Paul had friends, of course, of a kind; but none with whom he could associate upon terms of equality of mind, of the habits of life, and so on. But one day a fellow-convict raised hopes in his breast by accosting him and giving interesting news.

'A peculiar thing, Count Stirinof,' said the man; 'a new gang arrived last night, and among the number of convicts is one of about your age, who is so singularly like you that several of us have noticed it.'

'A double!' exclaimed Paul, laughing. 'How interesting! Is he a—well—a gentleman, like myself, under a cloud?'

'That is the peculiar part of it—he is so like you as to be almost a double, as you say, yet he declares he is a peasant.'

Paul felt greatly disappointed. 'I hoped, from what you said, that he was of my own class,' he murmured. 'Where is the fellow? I should like to see him.'

'I will point him out when we all exercise in the yard.'

Later in the day, when the prisoners were allowed to walk about and take the air in the walled enclosure provided for the purpose, the same man pointed out to Paul the new arrival considered by him to be so like the young aristocrat as to be remarkable.

Paul gazed at the new-comer in some astonishment. So far as he knew his own face and figure, there certainly was a likeness, and a remarkable one. Both youths were of good, sturdy build, and about the same height and figure. Their faces were, moreover, cast in a strangely similar mould. Naturally the new arrival, being a peasant, seemed to be of somewhat coarser texture; his skin was rougher and redder; he had the appearance of never having been well groomed, while Paul, in spite of his present untidiness, was obviously accustomed to careful washing and dressing.

Paul could not help being struck by the young fellow's likeness to himself. He compared himself, point by point, with the new-comer. His hair was somewhat darker than the other's. Their eyes differed a little, but only a little, in colour; their noses were absolutely identical, though, of course, Paul's skin was everywhere more delicate in texture.

Taking one point with another, Paul was astonished to find that he was really and truly like this young man: an aristocrat and a peasant! It was curious, rather interesting, somewhat humiliating.

Paul decided, after some mutual staring, that he would accost the new-comer; it was just possible, if their two bodies were so very similar, their two minds might be equally so. Paul approached him; as he did so he could not forbear to smile. The other smiled also. Paul laughed aloud, so did the stranger.

'It is a funny introduction,' said Paul at last; 'but you are really so absurdly like me that I can't help laughing.'

'That's what I feel!' said the other.

Paul's heart sank at the sound of his voice. It was undoubtedly that of a peasant.

'Yet I am an aristocrat,' said Paul, 'and you a peasant.'

'Thank heaven for that!' exclaimed the other. 'I hate aristocrats!'

'Why?'

'I have no reason to love them. It is a long story. I am here through aristocrats.'

'And I through associating with the lower orders!' laughed Paul. 'We may as well make friends, if we like one another. If we don't, after a bit, we need not continue.'

'Oh, but you are an aristocrat, and will expect me to speak with reverence, and so forth,' said the new-comer, 'and that I must decline to do. I meet people on equal terms, or I beg to be excused their acquaintance.'

'I like that in you,' laughed Paul. 'You are independent, I see, like myself.'

'Strange if we should be like in opinion, and so on, as well as in body,' said the other, laughing also. 'What's your name?'

'Count Paul Stirinof. And yours?'

At the mention of Paul's name a thin cloud seemed

to pass over the eyes of his companion. He did not speak for a moment. He frowned slightly, and appeared to think.

'Curiously, I seem to have heard the name somewhere—Stirinof,' said the youth, 'and yet I cannot connect it with any one or anything. A fancy, I suppose. A Count are you? Well, you are none the better for that.'

'Am I not? Well, perhaps you are right. We are both *here*, any way. You haven't told me *your* name.'

'My name? Does it matter? Call me Oriol, if you like. That's what most of my companions call me, or *called* me rather, at the village.'

'That means "eagle." Why are you called that?'

'I am supposed to be wilful and imperious, like an eagle, I believe,' laughed the peasant.

'Good. I like that, too. Well, Oriol, and what village do you hail from?'

'V——, in the government of A——. And you?'

'Why, that is not so very far from my country house, which is in the same province. Well, we ought to be friends, Oriol. We are strangely alike; we come from the same quarter of Russia, though I am, at least, half English.'

'Is this English?' asked the other, suddenly—

"I remember, I remember
The house where I was born,
The little window where the sun
Came peeping in at morn."'

'Hullo!' exclaimed Paul, greatly surprised, 'where did you learn that?'

The peasant had rattled the words off very quickly, running the words and lines into one another in such a way that it was scarcely recognisable as English—still, Paul did recognise it.

'I don't know. I suppose some one taught me as a child. I have always seemed to know it. Probably an English sportsman, who once came to shoot bears near our village.'

'How very curious. Do you know any more of it?'

'No, that's all.'

The two young men continued to converse until separated. This was the first stage of a great friendship, which sprang up quickly, and was soon greatly valued by both. But, before many days were passed, a still greater surprise was in store for Paul.

(*Continued on page* 134.)

THE ASS'S JOURNEY.

A True Anecdote.

THERE are many instances of animals which have been taken long distances and found their way back to their old homes without help, but few are more striking than the journey made by an ass in Spain nearly a century ago. This ass, which was named Valiante, belonged to Captain Dundas, an officer of the British navy, who had acquired the animal in Gibraltar. In course of time Captain Dundas went to Malta, and, wishing to make use of the ass, he gave instructions for him to be brought on from Gibraltar. The ass was therefore shipped on board a frigate named the *Ister*, which was to sail from Gibraltar to Malta. The vessel had not, however, gone far before she struck upon some sands off the Point de Gal. A heavy sea was running, and some anxiety was felt for the safety of the ship. The officers resolved to throw the ass overboard, hoping that as it was a good swimmer it might be able to reach the shore. They saw it no more, and many of them must have thought that it was drowned, especially when a boat which put off from the frigate was lost in the storm. After a time, however, the storm abated, and the *Ister* was got off the sands, and returned to Gibraltar for repairs, when the crew found that Valiante had returned before them!

In spite of the rough sea the ass had succeeded in reaching the shore. As soon as he had recovered from the exhaustion of his swim, he had evidently set out for home. He had never been in this part of the country before, and it is difficult to understand how he chose the right direction and picked out his way through a very mountainous country. He cannot have experienced much doubt or hesitation, for in a few days he had travelled from Point de Gal to Gibraltar, a distance of more than two hundred miles, and he was waiting in the early morning for the gates of Gibraltar to be opened. As soon as he was admitted he made for his old stable; the owner of the stable was surprised to see him so soon after the *Ister* had sailed, and he could only conclude that by some accident the ass had never been put on board the frigate. When, however, the *Ister* returned to Gibraltar, the true circumstances were explained.

You will wonder, perhaps, how it was that no one interfered with Valiante on his journey; the explanation is curious: It was the custom in Spain when a criminal was to be whipped, to tie him on the back of an ass. The animals which were used for this purpose had holes cut in their ears, to which the criminals were tied. Poor Valiante had at one time been put to this use, and as the Spanish peasants had a sort of horror of these animals, no one had dared to molest him.

THE CUCKOO'S NOTE.

AMIDST the cool green meadow-lands
The breezes lightly play,
The cuckoo's note is softly heard,
Now near—now far away.
Four little maids, with lightsome hearts,
Their youth's glad heritage,
Are learning lessons for awhile
From Nature's open page.

The grasses whisper at their feet
A host of secrets, passing sweet;
The streamlet murmurs low, yet clear,
And 'cuckoo! cuckoo!' greets the ear.

Since Winter held the land in thrall,
It seems but yesterday,
And as a dream, when one awakes,
Its memories fade away.

"Learning lessons for awhile from Nature's open page."

For who need think of frost and snow,
Of cruel winds that rage,
When learning in the glowing fields
From Nature's open page,
Where flowerets nod among the grass,
In friendly fashion, as we pass,
And overhead the sky is clear,
And 'cuckoo! cuckoo!' greets the ear?

NOBODY'S DOG.

(*Continued from page* 118.)

FRANK led the horses away to a stable at the back, while Luke and I went up the little garden-path leading to a small, neat cottage. The front door opened straight into a clean kitchen, in the middle of which stood a table, spread for a meal, with children's

"I will make myself the best playfellow I can."

rosy faces round it. I rushed at the faces—I love children—and I tried to bounce into their laps, and I knocked over the tea-cups. Everybody laughed, especially the littlest baby, who crowed and waved her spoon like a flag over her golden head, drummed on the table with her tiny fist, and kicked out her short, fat legs.

'Here's Father's own Rosie,' said Luke, stretching out his arms to her. 'Did Rosie want to play with the little doggie, then? So she shall.' He put her down on the hearthrug, and we tumbled about in each other's arms—the baby girl cooing and catching at my ears and talking baby fun, while I, hardly more than a baby dog, pretended to bite and tear and fight and growl, with tender touches of my tongue and white budding teeth on her velvet cheeks, and gentle pats with my horny paws—the only way I could think of to please her. I was trying to say, 'I am only a rough, biting, fighting, rough-coated animal, not dimpled, soft, and delicate like you; but I will make myself the best playfellow I can, and try hard not to hurt you even by an accident.'

Frank joined us before tea was over, and we had a fine game together. All the boys and girls were fond of him, little and big; he seemed like a great boy himself.

Meanwhile, Luke took his spade to do a bit of gardening in his allotment on the other side of the road, where he had made a seat under an apple-tree. Here Martha sat mending socks, while he told her all about me. 'Surely we have enough to feed a pup, and feed him well,' she said, 'but the money for the licence will be a pull.'

'We'll see about that,' said Luke. 'I don't greatly care for my pipe of a night, and I smoke it mostly to bear Frank company, and keep him out of the "Hand-in-Glove."'

'I wish Frank would be a man, and stay out for his own sake and ours,' said Martha.

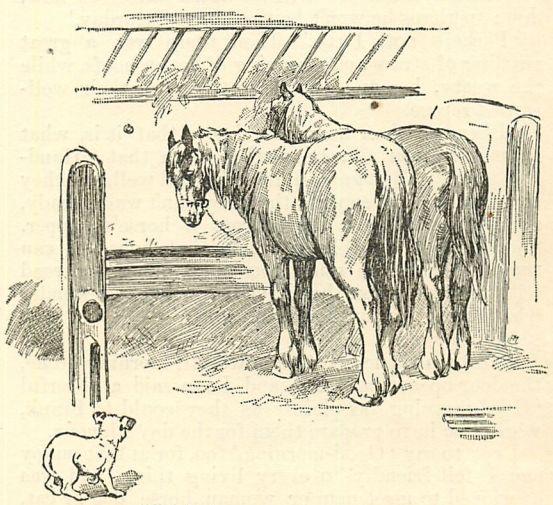
'However,' said Luke, 'the next question is, where is the pup to sleep? He's been used to a stable, and perhaps for a bit we had best put him up with Jonathan and David.'

'Then you had better be seeing about his supper there; it won't seem so strange to the dog, if he is fed in the place.'

'The horses will be company for him—he's used to horses,' said Luke.

The stable was but a short way off. Frank lived with his sister, Martha, and her husband, and was carter to a brewer. He was tremendously fond of the pair of fine horses in his charge, who, from having always lived and worked together, were like twin brothers. Jon and Dave, as they were called for short, stood munching their oats as Luke came in with me, and turned their broad, mild faces round to gaze peacefully at us out of their dark eyes. If it had been Frank, each of them would have given a little whinny as a greeting, for they dearly loved the carman, who never hurried them or made their timid hearts beat hard with fear, and who never once had raised foot or hand to strike either.

After a nice supper, Luke left me to make my bed where I liked in the clean straw; the horses and I were to rest together. At first, I felt just a trifle nervous—I was a small, defenceless creature, and the hoofs of Jon and Dave looked so big! I know now that both were as harmless as doves, but that first evening I crept cautiously to Jon's heels to sniff,



"I felt just a trifle nervous."

before I dared to jump into the manger, where I longed to lie. It had been in a manger, not under it, that I had been accustomed to sleep. Kind Jon never stirred, except to rub his nose against Dave's, and then I found out that he never did anything without first consulting his yoke-fellow. After a little more rubbing, and what seemed like whispering into each other's ears, Jon, who had watched me

trying to make up my mind for the leap, very quietly stretched out his huge head, grasped me firmly by the skin of the back of the neck, and lifted me as gently into the manger as I had seen Luke lift little Rosie into her high chair. I looked up gratefully at him, but he only turned round to Dave, and gave a small snore, as if to ask, 'Isn't that the proper thing to do?' and Dave blew a triumphant breath out of his nostrils, as if to say, 'I told you so. Always take my advice and you will never do wrong.'

Jon and Dave went on talking secrets for a long time, and making remarks to each other, and whatever Dave thought, Jonathan always agreed to. When Dave said the oats were good, Jon said so too, but when Dave went on—'but not so good as that fresh grass in the Flat Crafts, last Sunday,' Jon was of the same opinion.

'Sunday is coming round again, soon,' nodded Dave, half asleep, though he was not lying down.

'How I wish Sunday would come without Saturday, don't you, Jon?'

'I do, Dave,' murmured Jon, also nearly sleeping on his legs.

'Our master is the best man in the whole wide world,' said Dave, waking with a start, 'isn't he, Jon?'

'Yes, Dave.'

'He only tumbled down on the straw, and slept and forgot our water and oats because he was tired, didn't he, Jon?'

'Only because he was tired, Dave. I wonder why he is tired nearly every Saturday, and always after we have been standing so long outside the "Hand-in-Glove"—don't you, Dave?'

'Well, I think we will lie down ourselves now, Jon: perhaps he won't be tired next Saturday.'

'Perhaps not, Dave.' Then there was a great rustling of straw and stamping of heavy hoofs, while the weary, heavy creatures settled to their well-earned repose.

'It's more than horse can know, that it is, what happens to men as soon as they reach that "Hand-in-Glove." They go in quite brisk and well, and they come out ill, and so tired that they can't walk steady, and so stupid that they forget a horse's supper. Something wicked lives inside that house—I can smell it—and the smell comes all along the road with the men when they have been there. I wonder what they go in for, Jon, don't you?'

'Yes, Dave.'

And then silence settled down, till morning broke, the door opened, and Jon and Dave said a cheerful 'Good-morning' as plainly as they could to Frank, who came in to prepare them for the day's labour.

I ran to say 'Good-morning,' too, for at that puppy age I felt friendly to every living thing, and was overjoyed to meet man or woman, horse, dog or cat, anything or anybody that did not snub me. My dear master was not far behind, and whistled to me to run to the cottage for my breakfast.

'What shall we call the dog?' said Martha; 'a dog without a name seems almost like a dog without a home.'

'Suppose we call him "Jim" till we think of something better?'

(*Continued on page* 131.)

FROM THE CITIES OF ITALY.

IV.—THE BRIDE OF THE SEA.

NEXT on the roll of our Italian cities must stand the name which brings to our imagination the picture of a sort of enchanted land:—

'Venice, where the Doge is, where they wed the sea with rings;'

the wonderful Republic, rising out of the water, with its splendid palaces looking down upon their own reflections, and the dark gondolas, shooting along the canals and round the corners of the massive buildings. Everything about Venice is mysterious and fantastic, and unlike any other city—the view of it from the sea where the stately towers and domes seem to be resting only on the shimmering water; the brilliant colour which meets you everywhere, from the red and yellow sails of the fishing-boats to the glorious church, all one glow of gold and rich, warm mosaic pictures; the wonder of seeing, for the first time, the water lapping upon your doorstep—all these things give to a stranger the feeling of being in an enchanted country.

And the history of Venice is unlike that of any other place. No state was ever more devotedly served by her sons than the city of the sea, though we must add that she was a hard and not seldom an ungrateful mistress, apt to forget faithful service past, and to be merciless to any failure or mistake. The first victim, when things went wrong, was usually the elected head of the state—the Doge—whose fate it was to bear the responsibility for all misfortunes. 'Uneasy,' we know, 'lies the head that wears a crown;' and surely no head-dress was ever more uneasy to the wearer than that quaint little peaked cap worn by the Doges of Venice.

We may see their portraits around the wall of their magnificent palace—a long line of faces, with one blank, across which is painted a black veil, and which bears the name of 'Marino Faliero, beheaded for his crimes.' Poor old Marino Faliero! he was goaded and insulted by younger men, he felt his power slipping away from him, and he yielded to temptation and headed a conspiracy to overthrow the constitution. And he was executed between the two tall columns, where, with the shining waters before them and the most beautiful buildings of their city behind, those whom the Republic had condemned to death looked their last upon the sea and sky.

A little later on we find the portrait of the Doge Francesco Foscari, with a still sadder story. He was deprived of his office because of the ill-doing of a dearly loved son, and died, broken-hearted, a few days later, while the bells were ringing to welcome his successor.

But we will go back to the earlier rulers of Venice, and tell two pleasanter tales, of a great father and his worthy son, who each filled the difficult office nobly and well, though in very different fashion.

Towards the end of the tenth century, a young Venetian nobleman stood beside an old monk, whose days were passed in hard field-work, and listened

reverently to his counsel. For the monk was none other than the late Doge, Pietro Orseolo, who had left Venice to spend the remainder of his life in retirement, and the lad was his son, another Pietro, with a great career before him in the city which his father had served worthily already. The elder man's heart must have glowed with pride and hope, even though all worldly cares had been cast behind him, as he looked upon the youth who would keep his name alive in Venice.

'They will make you Doge, my son, and you will prosper,' he said; 'be not drawn aside from doing justice, either by love or by hate.'

And young Pietro Orseolo, leaving his father to go back to the busy, stirring life of his own city, carried the good counsel with him, and followed it well.

When he was elected Doge, in the year 991, the Adriatic was infested by pirates, who had their stronghold at Lagosta, and swooped down upon the coast towns, plundering and burning at will, unless the terrified inhabitants bought them off by promise of a regular tribute. This tribute Venice had, of late, refused to pay, and now appeals came to the Doge from the inhabitants of the Dalmatian cities on the opposite coast, begging that the Republic, who could afford to defy the robbers, would send help to her weaker neighbours.

It was an opportunity not only for crushing the corsairs, but for establishing a supremacy over the Dalmatian towns, and, in the spring of the year, Doge Pietro manned his ships and put to sea. His project was a bold one—not merely to attack the enemy's vessels, but to storm their stronghold, a fortress hanging, like an eagle's eyrie, on a precipitous rock above the sea. As he sailed, he called at one and another of the Dalmatian ports, and was welcomed everywhere with enthusiasm, while the younger men enlisted eagerly in the service of so gallant a leader. Thus reinforced, the Venetian fleet swept upon the pirate stronghold, and, after a fierce struggle, carried it triumphantly, and destroyed it. The victorious Doge, sailing back to Venice, 'made,' says the Chronicler, 'public declaration of the things he had done; how all Istria and the sea-coast, to the farthest confines of Dalmatia, were made subject, by the goodness of God and the success of the expedition, to the Venetian dominions.'

Thus did Venice take her place as mistress of the sea, and thence arose the custom of blessing the waters on Ascension Day, the time of Doge Pietro's return from his successful attack. The whole population, in festal array, would follow their rulers to the sandy strip called the Lido, and there a public prayer was offered that the waters might be 'tranquil and quiet to all that sail thereon.' In later times a ring was thrown into the clear depths, and the proud city 'wedded' to the sea which she ruled.

When Pietro Orseolo died, leaving his wealth to be divided between his children and the poor of the Republic, his son, Otto, was elected Doge. An elder brother, Orso, was Bishop of Torcello, the almost deserted island which had been the cradle of the Venetian State, and the first settlement of the race, and where, in the great, lonely cathedral, his stately marble throne still stands. Otto was the godson and namesake of the Emperor, who had shown him special favour, and looked for a career as successful as that of his great father. But such successes attained by one generation after another were always apt to arouse in Venice the dread of one family becoming too powerful. A certain Centranico headed a party against the Doge; Otto was deposed and banished from Venice with insult and obloquy. Orso, his brother, now Patriarch of Grado, seems to have gone with him into exile; but guessing, perhaps, that his fickle countrymen would soon repent of their action, he returned to Venice, and there waited his opportunity, and worked quietly and patiently for the younger brother, who could do nothing to help himself. And, as he had anticipated, the turn of the tide came. Centranico, who had been elected Doge in place of Otto Orseolo, was quite unequal to the work of ruling the turbulent city, and when Dalmatia seized the opportunity to rebel, the thoughts of Venice turned to the family who had made her great upon the sea. The glorious days of Pietro were remembered, and there was a cry for the Orseolo Doge back again. Let Otto be sought out and pardoned and restored to office. But Otto was far away in Constantinople; it would take time to find out his retreat, and bring him back. And, meanwhile, who so fit to fill his place as the loyal brother who had worked for him so patiently, and who, having grown up in the ducal palace, knew the duties of the office?

So Orso was made regent for his brother, and took up the burden of rule in the distracted city. He governed wisely and well, as became the great Pietro's son, and under his strong and peaceful sway there was tranquillity and prosperity. He made no innovations and attempted no expeditions; he was there to keep his brother's place, not to win glory or distinction for himself. He must have longed, surely, many a time during the year of his authority for the day when he could put the helm into Otto's hand and return to his own chosen work.

But that day never came to the faithful elder brother. The repentance of Venice had been too late for her banished Doge. The sad news came back that Otto Orseolo was dead in the foreign land whither his unjust countrymen had driven him, far away from the stately palaces and shining lagoons of his home. Many a man who had ruled, honoured and respected, for a year, would have made use of such a time of popular remorse to get himself confirmed in his office, but not so Orso. He had only accepted the position that he might fill his brother's place, and now that he could never resign his trust into the right hands, he sought no more honours from the Republic. He laid down the office he had held so worthily, and went back to his bishopric, sorrowing for the younger brother who would 'return no more, nor see his native country.'

And among so many who, in those rough, early days, struggled and intrigued for love of place and power, it is good to look back to the Doge of one year who only ruled for another, and resigned his honours so readily when his work was done.

MARY H. DEBENHAM.

"'Be not drawn aside from doing justice, either by love or by hate.'"

THE FOOTPRINT IN THE SAND.

"A long line of faces peered down from the parapet."

HEROES OF DUTY.

V.—JOHN CLINTON.

IT had been a hot July afternoon in 1894, and for boys who had only the close London streets to play in, the shores of the river, even near London Bridge, offered an attraction hard to resist. It was pleasant to paddle in the muddy water, and to feel the cooler air that blew across it. There are always plenty of boys in the summer months to seek this play-ground, but on the day in question there were two who loitered longer than usual. At seven o'clock in the evening, when crowds of people were passing homeward across the great bridge, John Clinton, aged ten, and a companion younger than himself, were still to be seen wading in the rising tide. A little later, John made his way to the landing-place, thinking it time to put on his shoes and stockings. The younger boy continued wading out into the stream. Suddenly his feet slipped on the treacherous mud, and in a moment he was carried beyond his depth.

The hurrying people on the bridge, far, far above him, heard his cry of distress, and a long line of horrified faces peered down from the high parapet. The distance seemed too great to render help, but before the cry had died away, John Clinton had jumped from the landing-place and was buffeting his way towards his friend. As the drowning boy rose to the surface he was seized by the brave young hands, and, with breathless, exhausting labour, was borne back to the shore. The current of the rising tide had made the task a very hard one, but the rescuer did not relax his efforts until his companion was in safety. Then the watching crowd, doubly distressed by their inability to give assistance, saw John Clinton slip, in his effort to climb the landing-stage, and fall back into the water, too weak to make a further effort. All his strength had been given to another, and courage could do no more.

It was not his first act of heroism, nor the first life he had saved, for a short time before, at great peril to himself, he had rescued a baby brother from fire, and extinguished the flames that threatened to destroy the house.

When, a week after that fatal July evening by the river-side, John Clinton was buried, the London Fire Brigade and the School Board, among many others, sent wreaths of flowers as memorials of respect for a 'boy hero.'

TWO NEGRO LEGENDS.

(*Concluded from page* 98.)

WHILE the tailor was telling me the story of his marriage, his wife had entered the room and taken up her work.

'It seems to me,' I remarked to her, 'that the girls in your country are cleverer than the men.'

'Because,' she said, 'our mothers gave us a good education. We all have had drummed into us the story of the weasel.'

'What is that?' I asked. 'Do, pray, tell me the story. I will store it up for the benefit of my wife —if I ever have one.'

She told it me. Here it is.

Mrs. Weasel, when her son was born, called her husband to her side that she might tell him her wishes.

'Fetch me the swaddling clothes that I like.'

'What are the swaddling clothes that you like?' asked the husband.

'I want an elephant's skin.'

'You must have taken leave of your senses!'

Mrs. Weasel's answer to this insult was to put the baby into her husband's arms, and start off on the quest herself.

And first she sought the earth-worm.

'Friend,' said Mrs. Weasel, 'my ground is choked up with grass. Help me to remove it.'

The obedient worm at once began to burrow. The weasel then appealed to the hen.

'See, Mrs. Hen!' she said, 'my grass here is full of worms. I need your help.'

The hen bustled to the spot, and devoured the worm. Then she began scratching up the earth.

The weasel met a cat.

'Good Puss,' she said, 'there are some hens on my ground; you should take a stroll down there.'

While the cat was eating the hen, Mrs. Weasel spoke to a dog.

'Master Dog,' she said, 'do you mean to leave the cat in possession of that plot of ground?'

The dog could not brook a rival. Nobody should be master but himself. Off he ran, therefore, to throttle the cat.

At that moment the lion chanced to pass that way. The weasel greeted him with deep respect. 'Do not go near that field, my lord,' she said; 'it belongs to a dog.'

The jealous lion instantly fell upon the dog and ate him up.

At last came the elephant's turn. Mrs. Weasel asked his help so prettily against the lion that, as the lady's champion, he entered her ground. The perfidious weasel meanwhile had returned home before him, and had dug a deep hole, which she had covered with leaves and branches. The elephant fell into the trap, and was killed in the fall. The lion, when he saw the elephant coming, fled into the forest.

The weasel returned home in triumph with the elephant's skin.

'There!' she said to her husband, 'I asked you for an elephant's skin, and you would not get it for me, so I have got it for myself.'

Mr. Weasel was greatly astonished. Never had he dreamed that his wife was cleverer than all the other animals, cleverer even than himself. He knew it now.

And that is why we say 'as sharp as a weasel,' or 'catch a weasel asleep!'

Thus the tailor's wife ended her story. Let us hope that there are not many women who are so 'clever' as the unscrupulous Mrs. Weasel!

FOR YOU.

WHERE are little tasks a-waiting that only you can do,
There are little songs want singing that must be sung by you;

There's a little race wants running that only you must run,
There are little things that you must do, or they will be undone.

There are little words of kindness that only you can say,
And little deeds set in between the bounds of each short day;
There are little fights and victories that only you can win,
And childhood's passing, oh, so fast—had you better not begin?

There are little hills before you that only you can climb;
Just try and mount up one to-day—'tis easier each time.
There's a little prize awaiting you for each small ill you bore:
Don't you think you'd better gain it now and keep it evermore?

HUNTING FOR ANTS' EGGS.

SOMETIMES, when you pass one of those shops in which they sell a variety of articles, you see a ticket in the window having on it, 'Ants' Eggs.' Ants' eggs are used for feeding birds and fish. Many persons give them to the goldfish kept in globes or aquariums, and they enjoy them, though it seems curious, because fish could not get such food for themselves while at liberty. Probably these ants' eggs have rather the taste of some soft kind of water-insect that fish obtain.

The name given to these little objects is not quite correct, for they are really only ants in the chrysalis state, but their shape and whiteness led to the idea that they were eggs. To game-birds which haunt woods and fields, ants' eggs are a great attraction. But few birds venture to touch the nests of the large red or black ant. Hence breeders of partridges and pheasants send out men and boys to procure supplies of this favourite food at the time of year when the ant-hills may be expected to be full of them. These agents have to equip themselves for the purpose; they take sacks and shovels and wear stout gloves and thick leggings, for they have to face armies of the small but brave insects, which defend fiercely their homes and the eggs or pupæ they have carefully nursed.

These ant-hills are found especially amongst the pine or fir woods of Hampshire, Surrey, and Sussex. Upon breaking up the top, thousands of working ants and of their eggs come to view; often there is a smell like that of strong vinegar, caused by the formic acid they produce. Though the collectors of ants' eggs guard themselves, they cannot avoid getting sharp bites from some of the angry ants, which plunge their jaws into the skin, and bending down their heads, throw the acid into the wounds thus made. It is no wonder that after a morning's work, the men come back rather uncomfortable, for the pain does not go off directly.

NOBODY'S DOG.

(*Continued from page* 126.)

CHAPTER III.

NO dog could be happier than I was in my cottage home, with Luke Bramble, his wife, and the children. I loved them all, from the eldest boy to baby Rose. I had meals with them, sitting up and behaving as nicely as anybody else, and, as I grew older, they let me slip upstairs and sleep with the little ones, instead of in the stable with Dave and Jon. This was a great honour.

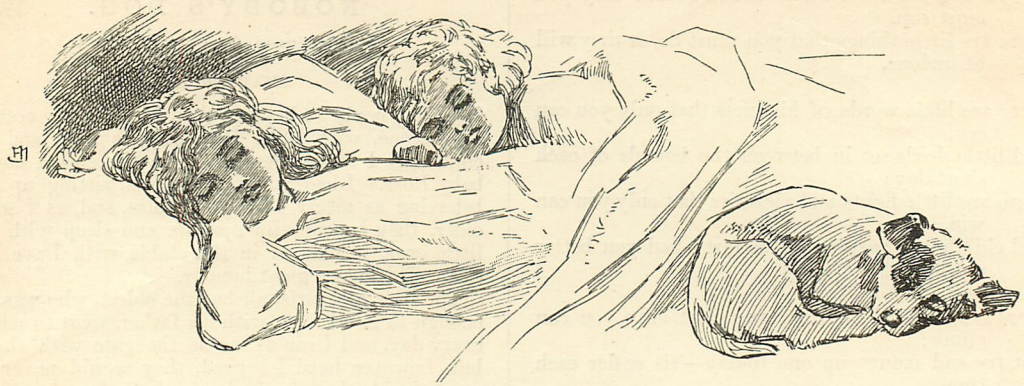
The boys and girls, all but the eldest, who was old enough to go to work with his father, went to school every day, and I ran as far as the gate with them; but, however hard I begged, they would never let me go inside the school. It was but a few steps from Luke's cottage, for you had only to cross the road. It stood next the church, with its green mounds. I had to jog home all alone, after seeing the school-door shut.

At first, when I was very young indeed, and hardly knew my way, and could not help stopping to play with every dog I met, Martha would always stand at the cottage-door and call 'Jim! Jim!' Then I ran straight to her. This was one of my lessons, which I had to learn as regularly as the children learned theirs. They taught me, very patiently and kindly, to come when they called 'Jim!' As I had plenty of sense, and was never made stupid by being frightened and unjustly punished, I soon began to understand the meaning of many words. The older I grew, the more sensible I became, till at last Martha thought it safe to leave me more to myself, and would go on with her washing and other work, trusting me to run in and out as I liked. I noticed that she was pleased when I kept near the house, and would call me a good dog, so I tried not to roam far away, though it was a great temptation, when I saw anybody that I knew passing by, to run out and follow, especially if I saw Frank with Jon and Dave.

He would often stop with the horses at the 'Hand-in-Glove,' and I wanted to find out what they did there. Once I ran over, and went in at the open door. There stood Frank, drinking something out of a glass, and talking to a man with a red face. 'Get out,' said the man gruffly to me, slapping his hands together. Off I scoured, with my tail between my legs. I never went into the 'Hand-in-Glove' again, no matter how long Jon and Dave might be waiting outside—perhaps for an hour or more, till even patient Jon scraped the ground with one foot, and Dave shook his shoulders.

I began to make friends—dog-friends, I mean—in the village. There were moments when time hung rather heavily on my paws—Luke might be at work, Rosie asleep, and the other children at school—and then I longed for company.

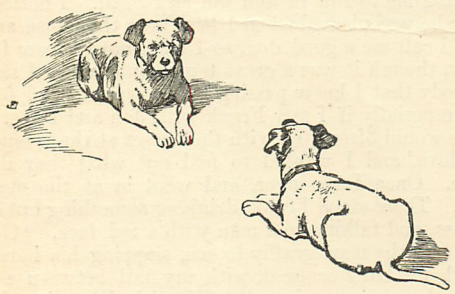
One pleasant morning, as I was fidgeting because there was no one to take me for a run, I saw coming down the road towards me a new dog—that is, a dog new to me—though he was not new in the sense of being young. This dog was bigger than myself, and was what you might call a middle-sized, middle-aged dog, of no particular breed. He had a short, stiff,



"They let me sleep with the little ones."

clean white coat, black ears and markings on his face, brown eyes, one or two round dark spots on his body, and a tail so ridiculously short that it was a mere knob; so that, when he wanted to look pleasant, he was forced to wag his whole body in order to make any show. Altogether, he reminded me of a fat, tight, hard, short bolster on four legs.

This dog soon spied me, and, to show a friendly spirit, he stole a little nearer on tip-toe, quivering his knob of a tail politely, and lay down in the middle of the road. Sticking up his ears as high as they would go, he fixed a stony stare on me. I ran out into the middle of the road and lay down too,



"I lay down too.

delighted to find so cheerful a break in the dull hour; and, after we had stared and wagged as long as etiquette demanded, up sprang the new dog as if his legs were steel springs, and we had about the best growling and biting match I ever remember. When we were both obliged to leave off, and lie down and pant and roll our tongues out on the strip of grass beside the road, he told me his name was originally Alphonso, but he had come down to be called 'Stubby.' 'Stubby Brown,' he added, proudly. 'I am quite one of the family. There is no Mr. Brown—only old Mrs. Brown. We keep the nursery garden away there'—here Stubby glanced his eye backward along the road whence he had come.

'You are only a young dog, I can see,' Stubby went on. 'I was young once myself, and I pity you. But now that we have got our wind again, what do you say to another sham fight, or would you prefer a stroll? Is there anybody you would like to be introduced to? There are pleasant dogs about here, and I know them all.' Here Stubby lay down on one side and dragged himself along over the grass, nibbling a few blades as he went. 'A good sort of towel this,' he remarked, 'and I find a bite or two of fresh grass excellent for the health. How I pity town dogs who get none, or else get it dirty! Were you ever a town dog?'

'I don't know what a town dog is,' said I, wondering much that my comrade had never mentioned what is usually first in a dog's thoughts—his master.

'To-morrow is the day for the fair up at the Crofts,' said Stubby, presently. 'I make a point of going to the fair—there are so many biscuits and bones to be picked up; not that I am at all in want, but I like to have something to bury. Besides, one sees a little of life. Shall I take you?'

'Aren't you afraid to go without your master?' I asked, timidly.

'You are enough to make a dog laugh!' he replied. 'Can't a dog stir without a man at his heels? I have changed masters so often that I have got over all that.'

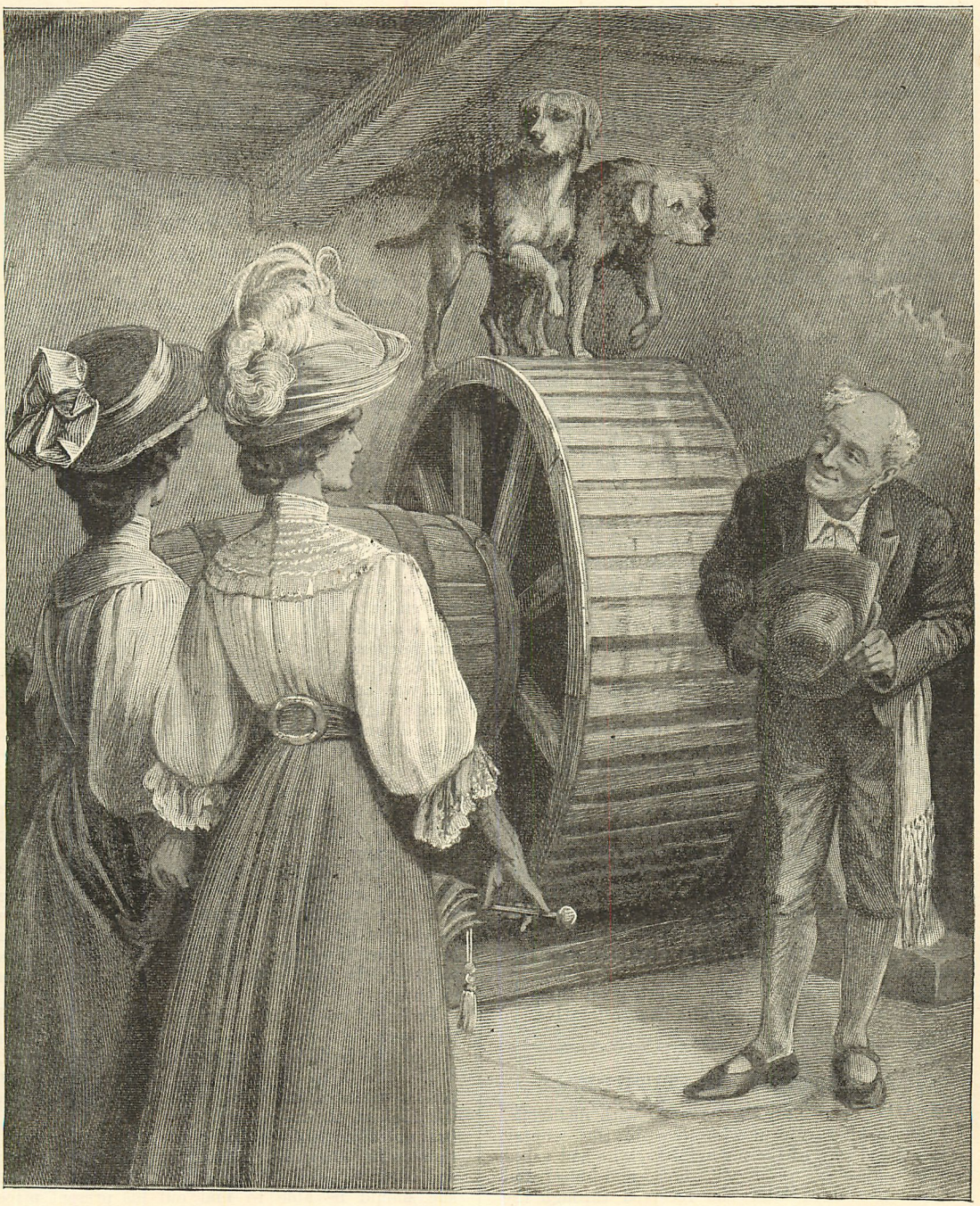
'Have you no master?'

'Oh, yes, I've got a boy somewhere. It isn't respectable to belong to nobody, and one is sure to come to grief. My boy works for Mrs. Brown—goes the rounds with the vegetables. He was a lost boy and I was a lost dog. We picked each other up on the road, and found our way to old Mother Brown's, and she took us both in.'

(*Continued on page* 140.)

NOVEL DAIRYMAIDS.

SOME English ladies staying in Capri had been directed to a dairy where they could obtain milk. When they arrived, they were rather alarmed by two large ferocious-looking dogs, almost like



"The two dogs kept turning the wheel."

lionesses, which rushed out at them. A man called off the animals, and ordered them to an inner room, signalling to the ladies to come and look at them. What was their surprise to see the two dogs standing on a big wheel, which they cleverly kept turning to churn the butter! The visitors carried away a pound of butter which had been made by these intelligent dogs, and very good they found it.

TORTOISE DOINGS.

A WRITER in a natural history magazine tells some interesting facts about tortoises, especially one brought from Morocco, which he had ten years. This tortoise was of active habits, and did not seem to want a winter sleep. Still, he liked to have some quiet repose by the fireside, when possible. He would lie close to the cat in front of the fire, puss not minding her odd companion, though his moving about annoyed her. When restless, the tortoise tried to burrow into her fur, more than once succeeding in clambering upon her back. This was more than puss could bear, and, getting up with a jerk, she would throw the tortoise over; he usually fell on his back, throwing his legs in the air, and appearing a very helpless and comical object. A younger cat brought to the house was puzzled by the tortoise. She sat and watched him, and if he put out his head, she gave it a sharp pat, which made it vanish, to her great astonishment. When a young terrier was introduced to the tortoise, he sat watching it, with fore-legs extended, and hind-legs doubled up, all ready to spring. After a time, the terrier got up and pawed the seemingly lifeless creature. One day, this dog was caught in the act of shaking the tortoise vigorously by one leg, as if he were trying to make the head appear. He had to be corrected, and soon the two lived together in quite a friendly way.

If a tortoise kills insects, like worms or slugs, it is also capable of doing mischief in a garden. They have a fancy for nice tender seedlings, and this Moroccan tortoise was once caught in the very act of revelling in a bed of young stocks; little sunflower plants also pleased him, and tender lettuces. Nor did he reject fruit, strawberries being his speciality, though slices of apple, banana, tomato, and orange also proved acceptable. Green gooseberries he liked, but their hardness and roundness were a trouble to him. Having made a fairly good dinner, he would retire on a summer afternoon to a hole he made, between a paling and a shrub. One winter this tortoise spent in a basket, under the kitchen table, though he did not sleep very soundly, for if there was a larger fire than usual, he put out his head, thinking perhaps that summer had returned.

During the winter months, it is a good thing to give a tortoise a little warm milk as a restorative.

A TRAMP'S GRATITUDE.

TRAMPS are usually looked upon with disfavour, but a kind woman who lives in the country once regaled one of these wayfarers, who had asked her for a glass of water, with bread-and-butter and tea. A few days later she received through the post a letter very oddly addressed: 'To the widow lady who lives next door to the cottage on which is displayed a warning to vagrants, on the left-hand side of the road as you enter B—— from W——.' The envelope bearing this curious superscription contained a letter of thanks from the tramp whom the widow had befriended. The man stated that he had now obtained employment, and he enclosed some stamps for the widow's acceptance.

This is a pleasant little story, worthy of remembrance when we hear of

'. . . hearts unkind, kind deeds
With coldness still returning.'

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 123.)

CHAPTER XIV.

IN a corner of the exercising-yard of the Yermatsky prison stood a stack of wood ready cut into the large billets which are used for fuel all over Russia, where the larger houses throughout the country are heated by means of great brickwork stoves. Paul and his new friend, during the first days of their friendship, had often half-laughingly declared that one night they would somehow escape from the sleeping-room, come down into this yard, and make a little raft out of these billets. The prison was built upon the bank of a good-sized river, a branch of the Yenisei, and the large yard, surrounded by workshops of various kinds, had a high wall abutting upon the swiftly flowing stream.

A gate, known to the prisoners as the water-gate, opened out of this wall upon the river, and occasionally a barge of wood would be unloaded by night at the little quay or landing-place made for this purpose.

Excepting in such cases the gate was rarely opened, but was kept securely locked and barred, though escape therefrom was impossible unless the fugitive were determined to risk his life by leaping into the wide and swift current of the river.

'We might climb the wall, each with a billet,' Paul suggested, 'and jump for it.'

The Eagle laughed. 'If I could climb the wall I should not want a billet,' he said; 'I am like a duck in the water.'

'Thanks; I think I will have the billet, though,' said Paul, laughing also; 'or one could climb the wall first, and the other could chuck billets up one by one for him to catch and toss down on to the bank; then the other would join him, and the little raft could be fixed up comfortably and floated with us on it.'

Probably neither of them seriously contemplated this mode of escape, for the difficulties of getting out of the building by night would be enormous. With the help of money, of course, the most ponderous locks and bolts might be made to move, the highest of walls could be climbed with ease; but unfortunately Paul had no money at present, though he knew his mother would move heaven and earth to send him a supply, so soon as ever she should be able to find out his present place of abode. This, however, he well knew, she might never be allowed to discover. Moreover, money sent to the convicts in Siberia must pass through many dangers before it reached their hands. Paul hoped, but scarcely expected, that one day a remittance would arrive from the Countess, together with the news of his mother for which he ardently longed.

The river just outside the prison, and as far up as the small town of Yermatsky, a mile or two away, did not freeze in the winter, owing to the force of the current at this place; otherwise, at this season, the rivers of Siberia were, for the most part, fast bound in ice and closed to all kinds of navigation. Doubtless this fact had been considered in the choice of a prison, for, should a convict contrive to climb the great wall, his escape would have been a far simpler matter had he found an ice-covered stream to cross instead of a turbulent and dangerous river.

One day, during the exercise-hour, Paul noticed that a quantity of wood had been landed and brought into the yard during the night; the billets lay strewn upon the snow-covered ground just as they had been pitched in at the open gate, and two men were busy collecting and stacking them.

Even this was an excitement of a kind for the convicts, and many stood shivering to watch the two labourers at work. If they attempted to converse with the men, beyond a greeting, they were compelled by their warders to move on, so that it was, for the most part, a silent crowd that stood and watched the stacking of the wood.

Neither Paul nor the Eagle was in the least interested in the wood-stacking; they preferred to move quickly about and take exercise. Often enough the two friends would engage in a long-jumping competition or a wrestle, much to the amusement of their Russian companions. Doubtless at such moments their English blood asserted itself, and the English passion for games insisted upon being indulged. For my readers will have found out long ago that, in his new friend, 'the Eagle,' Paul—though without being aware of it—had met his brother Mark once more.

On this particular morning Paul and the Eagle had already had their daily wrestling match, watched by a laughing, applauding mob of fellow-convicts, and Paul was now wandering backwards and forwards alone, the Eagle having been sent in by a sulky warder for making too much noise. The warder had nearly brought upon himself a quarrel with the young Eagle, who was constantly in hot water by reason of his independent spirit, which, as we know, could not brook interference or ill-treatment of any kind; but he had found that resistance, in his present position, was worse than useless, and only brought additional trouble upon him, and by this time his lesson was nearly learned. This morning the sulky soldier had been particularly exasperating, and but for Paul's advice, whispered at the right moment, the Eagle might have answered or even threatened him.

'Don't answer—obey for the present,' Paul had murmured; 'our time will come presently.'

When Paul gave this excellent and most discreet advice, he had no idea how close to the truth were the encouraging words at the end of his sentence.

As he walked up and down alone, the Eagle having been sent back to his workshop in disgrace, Paul stopped for an instant to watch the stacking of the wood. The rest of the convicts had by this time dispersed, and were walking about over the snowy ground, trying to put life into their half-frozen circulation, and for the moment Paul was the only convict close to the labourer whose duty it was to place the billets in position while his underling brought and heaped them close to his hand.

What was Paul's astonishment when he became suddenly aware that the first-named workman was speaking to him in a whisper: 'Master—dear Count Paul,' said the voice, 'look at me, but show no surprise; do you not recognise me?—I am Peter.'

It was all very well for old Peter to say 'show no surprise,' but even Paul, whose will was of the strongest quality, and who would gladly have obeyed the command, could not, for all his will, so control himself as to show none of the surprise and delight that he felt at the moment.

He realised, however, that he was probably watched, and that therefore the jump he undoubtedly gave at the sound of Peter's voice must somehow be explained for the benefit of any warder who might be looking on.

'Boo! *Kahk hólodno!* he exclaimed; 'how cold I am!' and forthwith he started walking quickly up and down the yard as though to warm himself.

After a turn or two, during which the joy and excitement he felt so insisted upon expression that Paul had the greatest difficulty in containing himself, for he longed to shout or sing aloud, he returned to the spot which he had left, close to Peter's elbow, and stood a moment.

'Peter—dear old friend—is it really you?' he whispered, keeping his head carefully averted, 'and you have come to help me escape—is that so?'

'I have a letter and a packet from the Countess, she will explain; I shall now place the packet between the third and fourth billet in this pile; drop your handkerchief as you go; I will place it where the packet is and point it out to you as you walk by, and you can pick up both together.'

'I understand.' Paul blew his nose violently, standing now with his back to Peter. In putting his handkerchief back into his pocket as he moved away, he dropped it.

Peter called out 'Ho!' but Paul took no notice and walked on. Peter picked it up and placed it upon his pile of billets. As Paul passed again he pointed to the handkerchief: 'You dropped it,' he said, 'take it.'

Paul did so. Within it he could distinctly feel a bulky paper packet. Good old Peter! he had managed it splendidly. He walked on, up and down, without stopping to converse again lest the suspicion of some warder should be aroused, but as he passed for the last time before the bell rang, he paused for a moment.

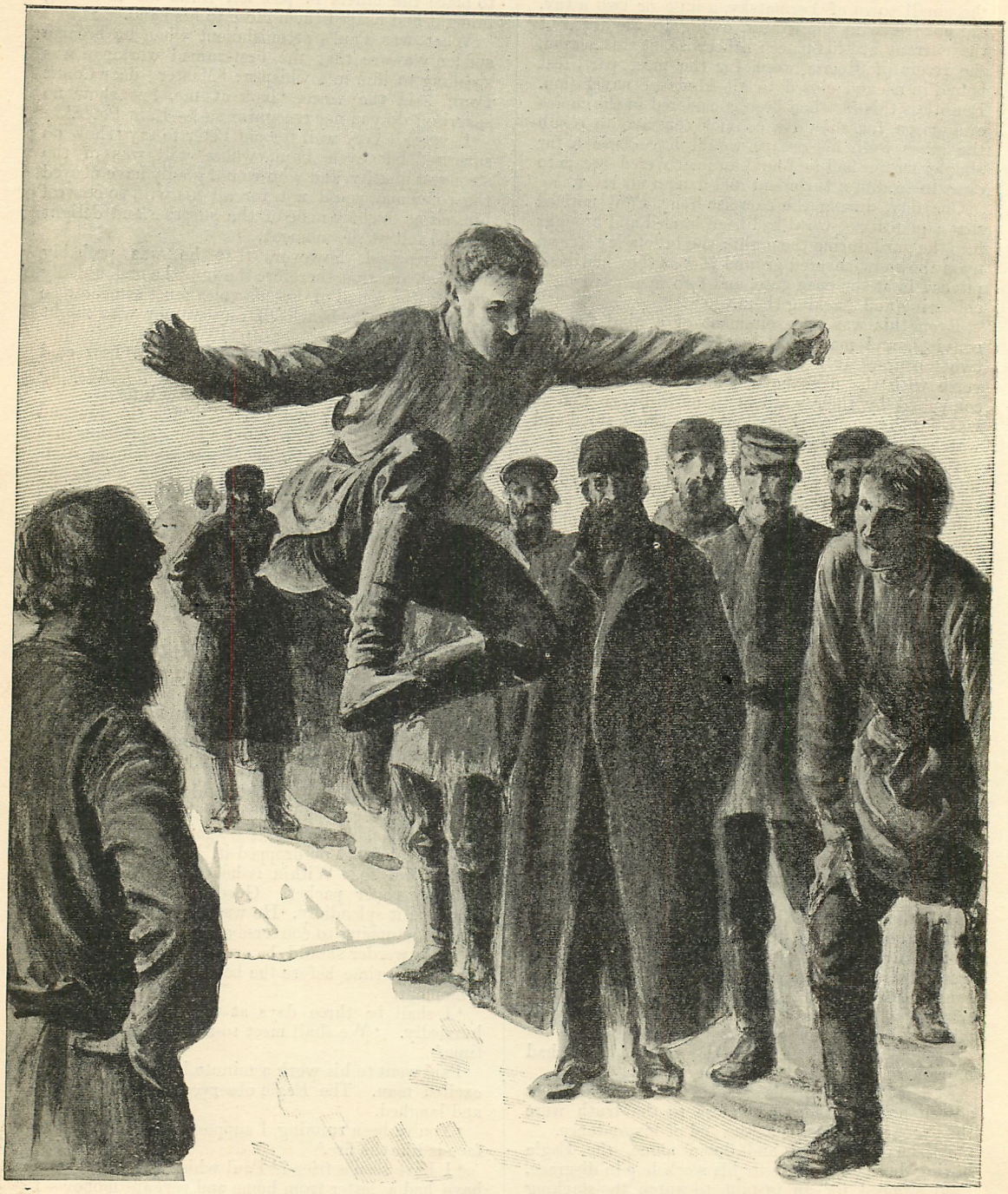
'I shall be three days at this job,' said Peter hurriedly. 'We shall meet to-morrow at the same time.'

Paul went to his work a minute later, a happy and excited man. The Eagle observed his high colour, and laughed.

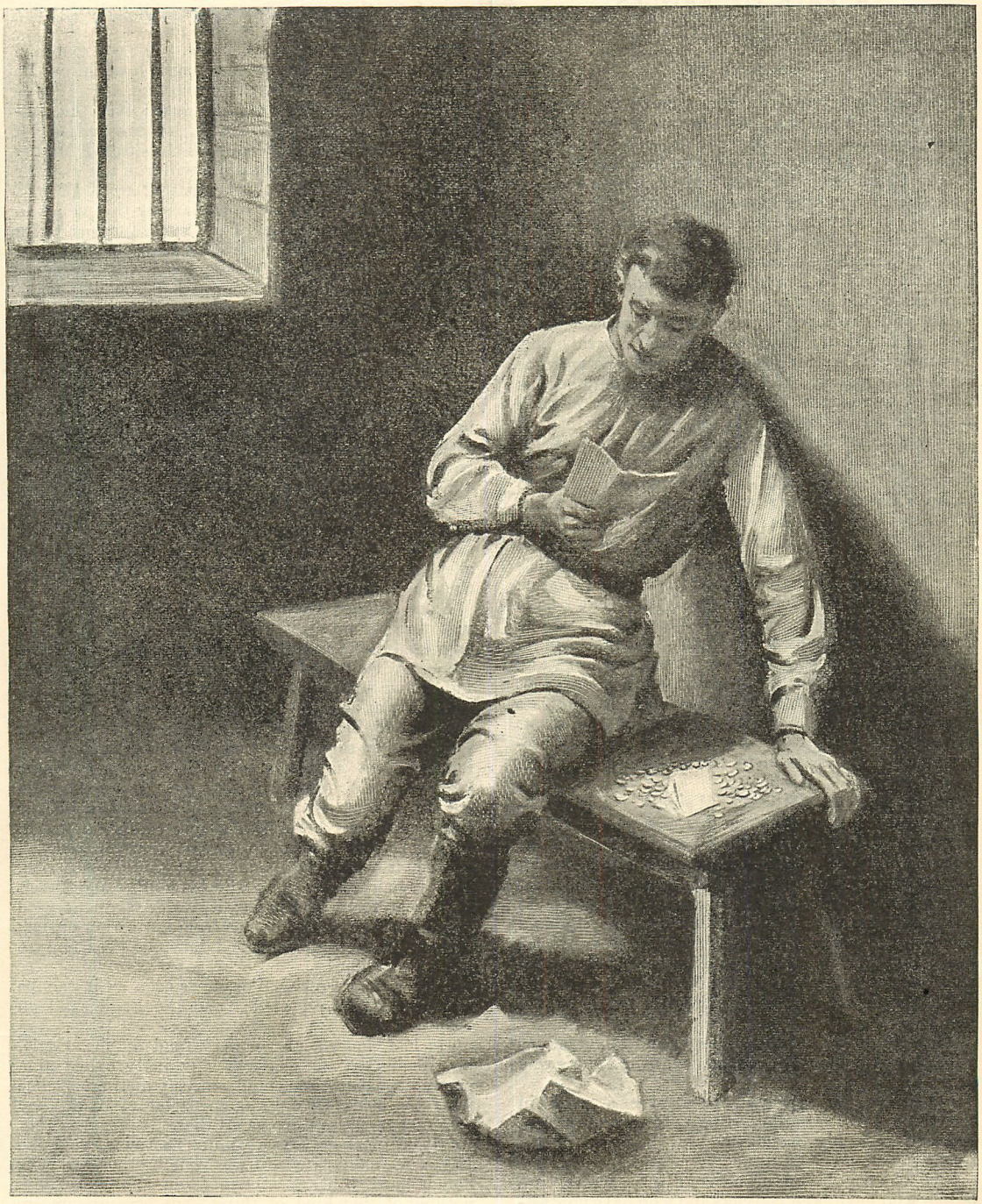
'You've been running, I suppose?' he said. 'Your face is like the fire.'

'I have seen a friend,' Paul whispered back, 'and have had a letter from home and perhaps money—I think, maybe, the day of our deliverance is nearer than we thought; when I have read the letter I will tell you.'

(*Continued on page* 138.)



"The two friends would engage in a long-jumping competition."



"Paul found an opportunity to open his packet in private."

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 135.)

CHAPTER XV.

PAUL soon found an opportunity to open his packet in private. Within was a large sum of money in notes and gold, together with a long letter from the Countess and a short one from Peter.

The Countess' letter was full of affectionate expressions of a mother's love and longing for her lost son. Paul must have patience and control himself, she wrote. In three years, if his conduct had been good meanwhile, he would be released from prison and at liberty to live where he liked—in Siberia; here she would join him. They would purchase an estate and live upon it until a full pardon could be won for Paul; then they would return home. Meanwhile, everything depended upon Paul's patience and good conduct. She begged him, if he loved his mother, to restrain his independent spirit in such a manner as to deserve his freedom at the end of the minimum term of three years. 'Above all things, do not attempt to escape,' wrote the poor Countess, 'for Siberia is full of those who strive to make a living by recapturing or shooting down unfortunate men who have escaped from the penal settlements, or who, after their release from prison, are attempting to return to Russia. These wretches have no mercy. For the love of Heaven and of your mother, do not risk your life—remember that I have only you. Nevertheless,' the Countess added, 'if you cannot bear confinement for three years, take counsel with Peter, who will find out about any ways and means of escape that may exist—if they do exist. Remember, however, that escape must be the last measure, only to be chosen in case of the direst necessity; also that violence alone is certainly useless, and would be fatal to the weaker party, which would be you.'

'Poor, dear old Mother,' Paul sighed. 'Patience—self-control—and confinement for three years—that is her text! How can she think I could or would put up with even *one* year's—one *month's* imprisonment, if I saw the remotest chance of escape? She must know I never could! Of course I shall escape at the first opportunity! With all this money in hand there will be neither difficulty nor risk. Three—four—six thousand roubles,' he counted, 'and a good sum in notes—why, I'd find my way out of the inside of every prison in Siberia for half the money.'

Then Paul read old Peter's letter and found it very wise, though he laughed a good deal over Peter's way of putting things.

Peter had, it appeared, been over a week in the little town a mile or two from the prison, and had certainly made the very best use of his time.

'All the population, or nearly all,' he wrote, 'are people who have been convicts and who have now settled in Siberia because they may not return to Russia. Siberia is full of such persons, and most of them sympathise with the convicts still in prison, and are prepared to help them, if possible. I have already obtained much information which will be of use to you, from those who know everything that passes within the prison. It is the roubles which have enabled me to learn all I know. For ten roubles I have taken over the wood-piling job of him who had been engaged to do it. From him, also, I know which of the soldiers keeping guard over the convicts is to be trusted—that is, bribed—and which are not quite safe. Find out which is called Mitka: he is one who, my friend says, will run any risk for money. Others who may be trusted are Kolia and Petka. Maybe there are others among the men who escorted your own gang. I tell you all this in order that you may be able to provide yourself with such comforts and indulgences as may make life more bearable to you, not in the hope that you will make any attempt to escape—that would be foolish and dangerous. The dear Countess, my mistress, is much set against such an attempt, and begs that you will not be rash. Nevertheless, she is well aware of your disposition, and is afraid that the pride of your race and the independence of your nature may cause you, in spite of her wishes and prayers, to make an attempt. I beseech you, dear master, if you must be rash, to do nothing without my assistance from outside, and, above all, to pave your way beforehand by the careful use of money, of which you can, of course, have any quantity. Do not overpay any man, because if you do you will be blackmailed and cheated; rather part with every rouble groaning, as though it were your very last.'

Paul laughed very much over this letter, which was terribly misspelt throughout, and very oddly expressed here and there; but the wisdom of the advice it contained, where it did not clash with Paul's own sentiments, he quickly recognised.

Greatly as he loved his mother, however, it scarcely occurred to him, even for a moment, to consider seriously her suggestion that he would put up with imprisonment in this or any other prison for three years—the idea seemed ridiculous! His mother did not know what life in a Siberian prison was like, or she would never even have suggested such a thing; supposing that a means of escape, however difficult, existed, it would be madness not to take the risk. Money, Paul knew, and so did his mother and Peter, is a great force in Russia; it would avail even to minimise the risks of escape from a Siberian prison; perhaps, if carefully managed, it would even remove them altogether!

'But risk or no risk, I'm off as soon as it can be managed!' Paul repeated; 'and the Eagle shall go with me.'

He had, indeed, grown very fond of the Eagle, his 'double,' as the convicts laughingly called him, pretending that they could scarcely distinguish one from the other, though, as a matter of fact, they were not really so alike as all that.

'Some of them say we must be twins,' said the Eagle, one day. 'I wish I was your brother, Stirinof; not because you are a count, you know—I think nothing of that kind of thing—but because you are a good chap and I like you, and we are both agreed about the unhappy condition of Russia.'

'Thanks,' laughed Paul; 'same here; I like you too. If ever we escape, you shall come and stay

with my mother and me—she's splendid—you can take the place of my dead twin.'

'What, you had a twin?' said the Eagle, much surprised. 'Hard that he should have died! Was he like you?'

'I don't remember. We lost him at the age of three, I fancy—it is said that a wolf ate him.'

The Eagle laughed. 'Your mother won't thank you for bringing a stranger—a peasant, too!—and dumping him down to be treated as a dead son,' he said. 'Because we hit it off pretty well, and you like me, it doesn't follow that every other aristocrat will.'

'My mother will like anybody I like,' said Paul.

'Yes, but by that time you will have changed, ten to one. It's all very well here, when you can't get associates of your own standing, but you won't want me long once we are out of prison and in the world again. You will be ashamed of your peasant chum.'

'Look here, Eagle,' laughed Paul, who spoke, however, more seriously than the laugh would seem to imply; 'unless you want your feathers plucked, don't talk nonsense to me. If you're a peasant, I wish I knew more of them. Unless you want to quarrel, stow that kind of thing—see?'

'All right; I will remind you of it when we are back in the world and I see you hankering after the aristocrats again.'

'I give you leave to remind me when you see that,' Paul laughed; 'meanwhile, there's going to be a row if you try it on before the event.'

'I wonder which would get the better of it if we ever came to loggerheads?' said the Eagle, thoughtfully. 'We are made pretty much on the same lines—I don't fancy either would want to give in too soon, once we began.'

Paul laughed, and ran his eye over his companion's figure.

'I think it would be an uncommon good fight,' he said. 'You are made a trifle bigger, I fancy, but for all your contempt for aristocracy, and so on, you must admit that there's something in "blood." I should have the pull over you there. I *couldn't* give in, you know, once I began.'

'Rubbish!' cried the Eagle. 'You would not find me much of a slacker, though I'm only a peasant and not a Count!'

The Eagle's face was flushed and his eyes were shining like stars. Paul looked at him with admiration, then he suddenly burst out laughing, and presently the Eagle joined in.

'However,' he said, 'I don't think we are going to fight—let's get out of this place first.'

And the opportunity to 'get out of the place' seemed to have arrived, as Paul told his friend the contents of his mother's letter and of Peter's.

'There's six thousand roubles in money,' he ended; 'that ought to see us out!'

For a moment or two the Eagle could not speak for amazement and emotion.

(*Continued on page* 146.)

KNOWLEDGE is the only possession which cannot be taken from a man, whatever misfortune may befall him.

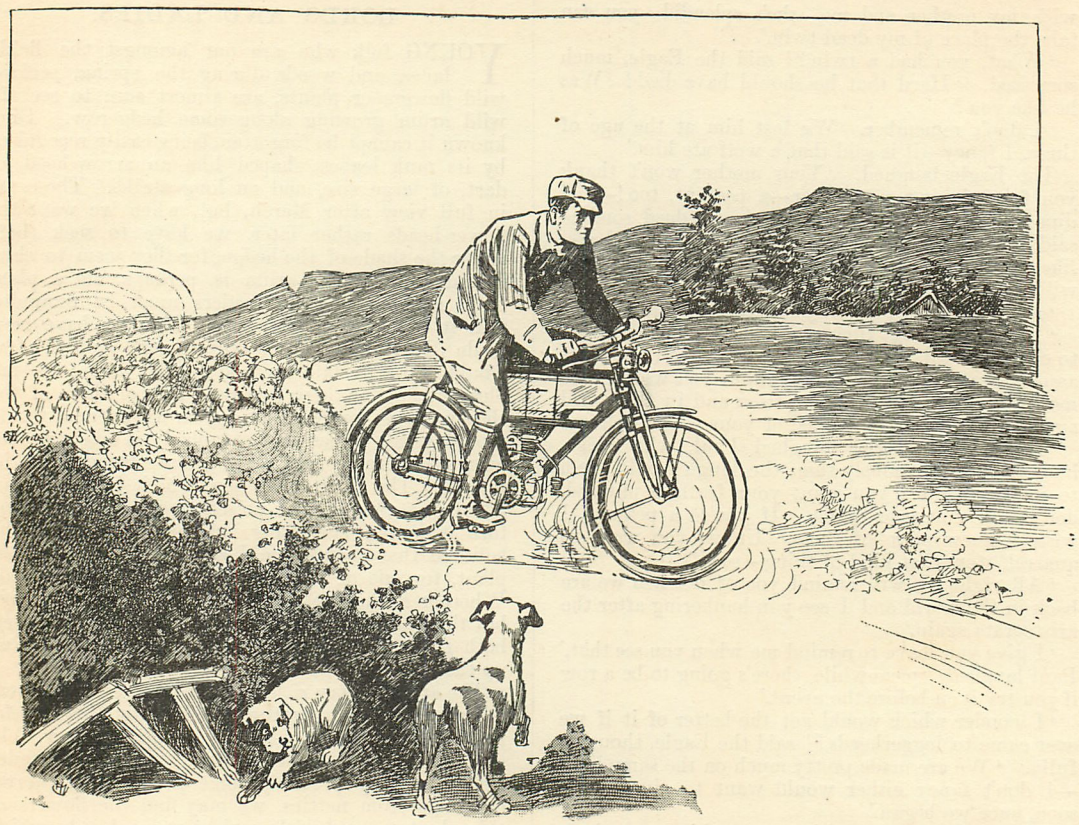
LORDS AND LADIES.

YOUNG folk who are out amongst the fields, lanes, and woods during the spring, seeking wild flowers or plants, are almost sure to see the wild arum growing along some hedgerow. Once known it cannot be forgotten, being easily recognised by its rank leaves, shaped like an arrow-head, or dart, of large size, and on long stalks. These are in full view after March, but, when we want the flower-heads rather later, we have to seek them under the shade of the hedge, for they seem to shun full daylight. The arum is, perhaps, not a plant to be avoided, but our readers must be reminded that it is a poisonous species. Children have been made ill by eating the leaves, though probably few would want to bite up leaves that have the unpleasant flavour these possess. Two or three of the showy orange berries that appear in autumn would probably kill a person, but nobody is likely to eat even one, because they cause intense burning in the mouth. The large root, too, which botanists call a corn, is also full of poisonous juice, and therefore it is not surprising that our ancestors, who believed that snakes could eat anything, gave the plant, for one of its names, that of 'adder's food.' Whether snakes do touch the arum we cannot say; but this is a fact that, when food is scarce in winter, both rooks and thrushes have been noticed digging up the roots to eat them.

The arum is very rich in names, and some of them are amusing, such as the one heading this article, perhaps less common now amongst country folk than it used to be. About May, by searching under hedges, getting probably some pricks from thorns, or stings from nettles, we may find the flowers of this plant covered with curious green hoods, which enclose the 'lords and ladies.' The first thing we notice in a flower is a top which resembles a nine-pin, or club, and below this there are four circlets on the spike. Lowest of all is a row of pistils, as botanists call them; next comes a row of imperfect ones; the third row is of stamens, and above that are some also that are imperfect. A fanciful eye saw in these the coronets, ruffs, and collars which were worn by nobles, and the flowers, being of two colours, the reddish-purple ones were styled *lords* and the white or yellowish were *ladies*. Some say that the dark-coloured flowers represent ladies and the pale ones lords.

Going on to more names, we must own that 'cows and calves' is rather a puzzle; 'parson in the pulpit,' again, means, we suppose, that the nine-pin top is the parson, and the circlets below form his pulpit. 'Cuckoo-pint' is a common name in several counties, alluding to the fact that the plant is noticeable about the time of the cuckoo's arrival in England. 'Wake-robin' probably connects the arum with the nest-building of the bird.

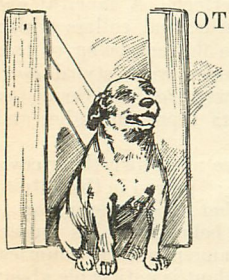
It is said that in the days of the Tudors the roots were dried, ground up, and employed as starch by the laundry-women. In the Isle of Portland, people formerly got from portions of the arum an eatable substance, like arrowroot or sago. Several species of arum are eaten in other countries, the roots being carefully cooked.



"'Whirr! There he goes!'"

NOBODY'S DOG.

(*Continued from page* 132.)



NOTHING I had yet heard was like to the noise which broke in on us as Stubby was speaking. A whirlwind of dust came in sight; it seemed to be moving towards us along the road, and there was a patter of very small feet, sounding almost like a shower of rain.

'It's a flock of sheep and lambs,' said Stubby, jumping up; 'and look — what a shame! — there is that Rupert Eversley spinning right through the middle of them with those horrid wheels he fastens to his legs. Whirr! There he goes!'

The frightened flock scattered right and left, and through the midst of them rode my old master. What a hurry he was in! He did not care that he left a little lamb lying on the road, crying piteously for its mother. I crouched and shivered, and tried to hide. I need not have been afraid; he was not thinking of me any more than of the lamb, but only of some pleasure to be had miles away.

'There he goes!' said Stubby. 'Much he cares what is in the way of his iron horse, or of the creatures he crushes as he goes. But he will overdo it some day, and smash one of his own sort, and then there will be a row. Men will see about *that*, though some of them laugh when they knock poor animals about with their motor-cars and bicycles. I wish he would get a knock himself, but he is too cunning for that.'

As he spoke, Stubby's eye fell on the 'Hand-in-Glove,' outside which old Jon and Dave were just drawing up, and he added scornfully, 'Men, indeed! They make poor horses go up and down Break-neck Hill, and keep to the Flat Crofts themselves; and, talking of horses, you wouldn't catch me kicking my heels and waiting outside a public-house like that pair yonder. If I were they, I would run away.'

'Jim, Jim!' came Martha's voice from the cottage. 'Dinner-time, Jim!' And off I scampered to join her.

The white cloth was spread on the table. Luke and the children came trooping in. My kind master stooped down to give a kiss to his baby and a pat to me, then, with one great sweep of his arms, caught us both up to sit one on each shoulder. A rumbling

sound, and a rush in the road outside, now made itself heard, and my master turned towards the window.

'Hark, Rosie! motor coming!' he said. 'Rosie shall see the motor go by.'

"One on each shoulder."

A terrible sound like thunder came nearer and nearer; my master's face changed. Hastily he put the baby down, almost throwing her to the floor, while I jumped off the other shoulder, and, rushing bare-headed from the door, he cried, 'Fool! he has done it at last!'

I followed, just in time to see Jon and Dave, with the waggon after them, dashing madly from the door of the 'Hand-in-Glove,' while a motor-car glided swiftly away over the level road through the Flat Crofts. It had passed close to them; they had lost their presence of mind at the wheeled monster—that mysterious horror that travels no horse can tell how. In their overwhelming terror, they were running to certain destruction. My master, forgetting everything but that soon the noble pair of horses must be a mangled heap at the foot of the hill, swiftly followed, availing himself of a short cut across his back garden. Driven by their agonising fright, it seemed as if nothing could save them crashing into the wall at the sharp turn ending the hill. Frank, white with despair, was running far behind; Luke, with his wits about him, and straining every nerve, got ahead of the horses midway, and, all the heart of a brave man rising within him, sprang, almost flew, from the hedge, and hung on to the horses' bridles.

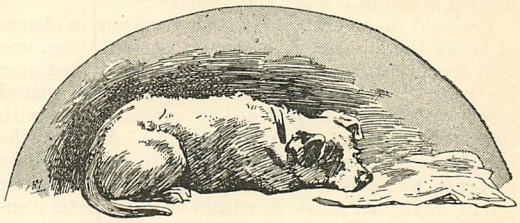
Jon and Dave tried—how hard they tried!—not to hurt the man. Even in that awful moment they did their best to slow down at the touch of his hand and the sound of his voice, but they were heavy, and the weighty waggon was behind. I knew that my dear master was in danger of his life, and I, his poor little weak servant, could only howl or pull at his coat in my distress.

He would not loose his hold, till at last he fell in a heap among the horses' feet, as the foremost waggon-wheel, striking against a large stone, brought it to a halt.

Jon and Dave stood quietly enough, the swollen veins of their faces telling of all they had undergone. Humbly and sorrowfully they lowered their heads to sniff at the man who lay so still; then they rubbed their cheeks together as if to comfort one another.

'Was it our fault, Dave?' said Jon. 'How could we help running away from such things? A waggon that can go without horses! How awful!' And the big fellow trembled.

Others were coming up now—Frank first, then Martha, who knelt down over the body and sobbed.



"I lay with one paw on the handkerchief."

Then a crowd quickly collected round and shut me out. I found his handkerchief, which had fallen by the wayside; it was all they would let me have of him. Then they fetched a mattrass and laid it in the waggon, and stretched him flat on it. Jon and Dave quietly and slowly drew him up Break-neck Hill, Frank leading them.

I lay with one paw on the handkerchief, and whined quietly as they slowly faded out of sight.

(*Continued on page* 149.)

THE SHRIMPERS.

WE are merry little workers,
Standing by the open sea;
And we're busy, oh, so busy,
Busy catching shrimps for tea.
With the blue sky far above us,
And the ocean blue around,
Sure a merrier little party
Could not anywhere be found.

When the tide is ebbing seaward,
Forth we sally, for we know
It is always best for shrimping
When the waves are running low.
O'er the sands we trip so gaily,
With our baskets in our hand;
Little shrimpers, busy shrimpers,
Standing on the ocean strand.

Books and lessons are forgotten;
All we need just now to know
Is the spot where happy children,
If they're wise, should shrimping go.
Open sky and waves can teach us
More than we could learn in books,
And the sweet warm sun will give us
Sturdy limbs and healthful looks.

When our pleasant toil is ended,
Homeward then we take our way,
With our baskets heavy laden
With the harvest of the day.
We are merry little workers
Standing by the open sea,
And we're busy, oh, so busy,
Busy catching shrimps for tea.

THE ORIGIN OF 'ETIQUETTE.'

THE French word *etiquette* really means a 'label' or 'ticket.' How, then, comes it to denote 'conventional forms of ceremony,' which is the definition given in Nuttall's dictionary?

It is said that a certain Scottish gardener, in charge of Louis the Fourteenth's garden at Versailles, was very much put out because the courtiers walked over his beds. To keep off these trespassers he placed labels or tickets—*etiquettes*—at various spots, with instructions as to the proper path. At first the haughty courtiers did not deign to notice these placards, but a hint from high quarters that their walks in future must be within the *etiquettes* compelled their obedience.

Thus, according to the story, originated our present use of the word 'etiquette.'

CATCHING PTARMIGAN.

HOW jolly it is to have plenty of ice and snow in the Christmas holidays—snow-building one day, skating another, and snow-balling to make things lively all the time; jolly for boys and girls who have good homes and warm clothing, but not jolly at all for those who have neither. A long, hard winter is a time of difficulty and anxiety to all poor folk, especially to those who live in the northern countries such as Norway, Sweden, and Lapland, where the land is ice-bound and snow-covered for many long months, and the difficulty of providing food for the family is keenly felt. Norway is a beautiful country, but the land is poor, and the crops are so scanty that the peasants find it a hard matter to gather, during the short summer, enough food to last through the long, long winter.

This is how the boys help. When the good Housemother finds her larder growing empty, she tells her lads to go and catch some ptarmigan. Not shoot, you observe, but *catch*. How do they set about it? First, they get out their ski or snow-shoes—long, narrow slips of wood, not unlike the runners of a sledge. These they strap firmly on, and off they go very cheerfully. Each carries an empty bottle, a small bag of crumbs, and a sack thrown over his shoulder.

Lightly they skim over the snow-covered fields until they are some distance from home, for the birds they seek are shy and do not venture near the dwellings of men. The boys do not look for ptarmigan—they know it would be of no use to do so, for these birds are in winter quite white; Nature provides thus for their protection, for what can be more invisible than a white bird in a snowy land? The boys, therefore, do not waste time in looking for their game. When they come to a nice smooth bank of snow, they push their bottles into it, making a series of round holes; in each hole they sprinkle a few crumbs, and then away they go to find another nice smooth drift where they repeat the operation. By-and-by the pretty white birds come flying over the snow, looking for food. Poor things! they are quite as hungry as the boys, and when they see those crumbs lying at the bottom of a round hole, they pop down their foolish heads and begin to gobble them up. And then, like boys and girls, they find out that it is much easier to get into a hole than it is to get out. The more they struggle in the snow the deeper they sink, and when the boys return they find in some of their holes a big white bird standing upon its head and quite unable to escape. The birds are popped into the sack, and away go the gay young hunters, proud to think that they have provided a good dinner for their mother and sisters at home.

FROM THE CITIES OF ITALY.

V.—FLORENCE: PEN, BRUSH, AND CHISEL.

AS we said before, the story of Florence is a story of fighting, and yet the fights are the least important part in the history of the fair city. It matters very little indeed, now, whether Guelf or Ghibelline, black faction or white, held the field for a time; the great days in the story of Florence are not the days of battle.

Dante, Cimabue, and Giotto are three of the greatest of the sons of Florence. But other names stand out among the many who were the glory of the famous city in those days.

First, though not, I think, greatest, we see a steady-going, business-like young man, cautious and saving, yet withal a great artist and fully aware of his own value. Lorenzo Ghiberti had, as it were, leapt into fame from the result of a competition. The Government of Florence offered a prize for the best design for the bronze doors of the Baptistery, the oldest church in Florence—'my beautiful St. Giovanni,' as Dante called it, lovingly. We can still see the panel sent by Ghiberti for competition and unanimously awarded the first place, and we can

wonder over the great doors, with the groups of spirited figures fitting the spaces so perfectly—those doors which the greatest Florentine of them all, Michael Angelo, whose words were cherished and repeated from generation to generation, declared 'worthy to be the gates of Paradise.'

Ghiberti had a share in the completion of the Cathedral, in company with a little keen-eyed, dark-faced, ugly young man, Filippo Brunelleschi, a greater man, in truth, than our steady-going Lorenzo, even though he had competed with him for the gates, and failed. The two were as unlike as fire and water, for Brunelleschi was a very whirlwind at his work, now flying to Rome to study classical architecture on hands and knees upon the dome of the Pantheon, now taking the breath away from the cautious Commissioners of Works by his daring demands and suggestions. Brunelleschi had wit enough to see that his long-headed colleague was making capital out of his ideas, and took a comic method of proving his own superior powers. When the work was in full swing, the fiery little architect disappeared one morning, having retired to bed with a pain in his side. The workmen begged for instructions, but Brunelleschi was far too ill to attend to business. 'Go to Ghiberti,' was the message from his sick-room, 'he is my coadjutor—let him take my place.'

But from Ghiberti no satisfaction was to be got; he was clearly not in his colleague's counsels; the work was at a standstill, and the agitated magistrates were driven to wait upon the would-be invalid, who must have chuckled under the bedclothes as he calmly replied that, since Ghiberti received the same salary as himself, he ought surely to be equal to taking his place in an emergency. Even when he had been persuaded to recover and return to work, he took a wicked delight in leaving his colleague a perfectly free hand as to the manner of supporting the dome, until the discomfited Ghiberti was driven to eat humble pie, and to acknowledge that Brunelleschi was the originator of the design, and the only person who understood it.

Last, but certainly not least of the trio of fellow-workers, comes the man whose very name tells us something of his story. Very few people know Donato di Betti Bardi. Among his own contemporaries, and to all ages since, he is Donatello (the soft Italian diminutive, 'little Donato'); and the tales of him show not only the greatest sculptor of his day, but the frank, impulsive, open-handed friend and comrade. He could be at times somewhat hasty and passionate, as the following anecdote, recorded by his admiring biographer, bears witness.

Cosimo di Medici, the great merchant prince, who, by force and by craft together, had made himself the most powerful man in Florence, was a patron of Donatello, and introduced him one day to another merchant, a Genoese, who might be depended on for an order. The result was that Donatello received a commission for a large bust in bronze, with which the visitor hoped to astonish his native city.

The work was done, and well done, but the purchaser, who knew very little about art, though a good hand at driving a bargain, had no intention of paying the sum asked by the sculptor without a certain amount of haggling. Donatello, though the most careless of men where money was concerned, resented this as a slight to his work, and Cosimo di Medici was appealed to to arbitrate. He demanded that the bust should be placed in a loggia, one of those verandahs or covered balconies overlooking the street where the Florentines loved to take the air and escape the sun. Down below stood the two keen-eyed, business-like merchants, each prepared to be a match for the other in valuing the work, and above stood the eager sculptor, with scorn in his eyes for the men who could chaffer, like two market-women, over this beautiful creation. Cosimo meant to do his best for his *protégé*; he praised the bust warmly, and suggested cautiously that it was worth more than his friend offered. The Genoese would probably have accepted his terms in the end, but he was not going to consent at once.

'Look how quickly it has been done,' he grumbled. 'Less than a month's work, after all, and that means half a florin a day.'

Cosimo was doubtless prepared with an argument, but the patience of the sculptor would stand no more.

'You to value works of art!' he cried indignantly. 'To bargain over beans is your business. I will show you how half a minute can destroy the work of a year.' And, with one vigorous push, he sent the bust down into the street below, the battered fragments lying scattered at the feet of the judges. In vain the Genoese, in horror at losing his treasure, implored him to remake it at twice the price; in vain Cosimo added his persuasion.

'He that will not when he may,
When he will he shall have nay.'

Donatello would work no more for so unworthy a patron.

How little he actually cared for money can be judged from his habit of hanging his earnings in a basket from a beam, leaving pupils and friends to help themselves.

A better and kinder friend and comrade than he never lived. There came to him one day in great perturbation the sculptor, Nanni di Bauco, who had just completed a group of figures, and now found, to his dismay, that they would never fit into the niche allotted to them.

'Go you out to Prato and take some measurements for me,' said the good-natured Donatello, 'while I see what can be done.' And setting to work with keen eye and ready chisel, he so shaved and compressed the four figures that they accommodated themselves perfectly to their quarters.

On another occasion, a somewhat stingy Guild, who had failed to come to terms with Donatello, gave their commission to Nanni di Bauco. To their disgust his charge proved higher than that of the greater master, and Donatello, to whom they appealed, quite agreed with him.

'He is less experienced than I, therefore his labour is greater,' said he, stoutly, 'and he should be paid for his time.'

Dear Donatello! mighty artist, good comrade, kindly soul, there is hardly a name upon Florence's long roll of honour that comes nearer to our hearts than his.

MARY H. DEBENHAM.

"The fragments lying scattered at the feet of the judges."

"They *did* go!"

A CALIFORNIAN FLOOD.

A True Adventure.

YOUNG men who live in California have sometimes lively experiences. The following narrative is taken from a private letter.

'I must tell you' (the writer says) 'of my latest adventure, when I was nearly washed away by a flood. An Englishman who was staying with us for a day or two, went with me to the forest, several miles off, to look for fuel. It had been raining for some days, and great quantities of snow had fallen on the mountains. Well, away we went with our pair of horses, but, when nearly at our destination, met a man who said that a wave ten feet high was coming along the slough (a sort of shallow ditch, very wide — an overflow of the river), and flooding everything. This made us hesitate, but, being in need of fuel, and allowing for exaggeration, we ventured on, but did not cross the slough, only several smaller ditches which led from it. At last the horses became very restive (smelt danger, I suppose), and I was compelled to get upon the seat of the waggon to hold them. I had scarcely got there when I saw the water coming in one vast sheet towards us. I yelled to the other fellow to let the horses go. And they *did* go! I was never in such a buzz before. The trees got up and gave the waggon such bangs that I thought we should never bring it home. The water in the first ditch was not running at any great speed, so we crossed that easily. Then we made another gallop for the next. Here the water was overflowing on both sides, carrying stumps of trees and *débris* along with it. This the horses refused at first, but with encouragement they boldly plunged in. Brave beasts! The ditch had been washed into a regular pit, and they swam and plunged and scrambled in a manner which made me fear that they would break their legs. We got through, however, although not without being washed a long way downstream — and the ditch was not more than thirty feet wide! Then another mad gallop across a flat plain, over which the water was racing also, and then on to the high level and safety.'

PUZZLERS FOR WISE HEADS.

5.—CHARADE.

My first is almost worthless; my second is indefinite; my third is light, round, and spongy; and my whole is a poor creature. C. J. B.

[*Answer on page* 179.]

ANSWER TO PUZZLE ON PAGE 107.

4.—*Brighton; Ramsgate.*

B A R T E R
R E G A T T A
I S L A M I S M
G R O S S
H A N G
T A P I O C A
O B J E C T
N O O S E

THE FIRST WINDOW-SASH.

WE are so in the habit of using convenient things that we take them as a matter of course, and seldom think how they came to us, or wonder who invented them.

The word 'sash' tells us that this kind of window was a Dutch invention, 'sas' being the Dutch word for 'sluice.' The windows derive their name from their resemblance to the sluices on the Dutch canals. They open in the same way.

These Dutch windows came to us about the same time as our Dutch king—William the Third—that is, in 1688. At first only the richest people could afford them. From England they were introduced into France. Marshal De Lorge, who was the first Frenchman to employ them, used to invite people to his house at Montmartre that they might see this wonderful novelty. In Queen Anne's reign we find that sashed windows had become more common in England, and were mentioned in advertisements of houses to be let or sold. When the window tax was removed, the sash arrangement soon got to be the commonest form of window.

It is good to cultivate a little wholesome curiosity about the beginnings of things.

SEVEN GOOD RULES.

1. NEVER put off till to-morrow what you can do to-day.
2. Never trouble another for what you can do yourself.
3. Never spend your money before you have it.
4. Never buy what you do not want because it is cheap.
5. Pride costs us more than hunger, thirst, and cold.
6. We seldom repent of having eaten too little.
7. Nothing is troublesome that we do willingly.

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 139.)

CHAPTER XVI.

'DO you mean you are going to allow me to share in all that you can get and do with that pile of money?' said the Eagle, with a gasp, when he had found his tongue. 'You had better make sure of your own escape first. I will take my chance afterwards, with a little help from you in money, if you can then spare it and send it to me.'

'Don't be a fool, Eagle!' said Paul. 'We go together, or I don't go at all. There is money enough here to pave the way for a dozen to escape, and old Peter can get me as much more as I want. My mother is rich. *Of course* you shall come with me. We shall be a help to one another, too.'

'I will be your slave for ever for this, Paul,' said the Eagle, almost too happy to speak.

'Nonsense! I have taken you on in place of my dead twin,' Paul said with a laugh. 'I have half a mind to call you Mark. What will old Peter say, I wonder, when I tell him I have decided to go, and cannot live patiently here for three years?'

'Be sure he never supposed you would, nor your mother either; they only hoped faintly that life might be tolerable enough here to be endured for a while. So it would be if there was no hope of escape. Once there is a loophole, naturally every caged cat or dog will try to squeeze through it.'

'That's right,' said Paul. 'Peter or no Peter, we will do our best to squeeze ourselves out, eh?'

On the following day Paul sauntered, at exercising time, past the spot where Peter was diligently toiling at his wood-piling.

'The three years' patience is impossible,' he said as he passed; 'I am quite determined to escape, and at once. Waste no time in arguments, but arrange quickly, and have your plans ready for to-morrow; there will be two of us.'

Peter, who had made no sign as the young Count murmured the first part of his quickly-uttered statement, gave an obvious start as Paul spoke the last words. Paul instantly continued his walk; Peter also continued his wood-stacking. Paul did not return the same way for several minutes. When he did, he selected a moment when no convict was close to the old man.

'Why do you say there are two of you?' whispered Peter. 'For two to escape more than doubles the danger and the expense. Who is the second?'

'My great friend.'

'It is impossible to take him with you; the risk would be too great.'

'Then I must escape without you, for my friend, in any case, shall go with me.'

'If that be so, I must so arrange,' said Peter humbly. None knew better than he that what his young master's heart was set upon, that would be attempted.

'It will be very difficult,' he muttered; but Paul's heart was not moved by the sigh which accompanied his words.

'Tell me the beginning of your plans when I pass in ten minutes,' said the young autocrat, walking forward, having apparently finished the inspection of a billet of wood which he had lifted up and examined.

At the end of the yard a soldier, one of the permanent warders of the prison, spoke to him.

'You seem to be interested in the work of the labourer at the other end of the yard,' said he; 'wood-stacking is an interesting occupation.'

'Everything is absorbing that does not belong to the daily round,' said Paul. 'May I not watch his work?'

'Watch it, by all means,' said the soldier. 'If the man happens to be an old friend of yours, a conversation with him after exercising time may be arranged. You might, for instance, slip over a billet and hurt your ankle. I shall be there to see that you are really hurt, and require to sit awhile. Let the accident happen just as the bell rings.'

Paul looked intently at the man. He had hitherto scarcely spoken to the fellow or noticed him. He was the ordinary type of a Russian soldier—dirty-faced, of severe expression, stolid, stupid-looking; but when the fellow spoke, his face took on a look of great cunning.

Paul determined to make a bold venture.

'Is your name Mitka?' he asked.

The man grinned. 'That is my very name,' he said. 'What it is to be famous! I have been warned that it is possible there may be a hole in your pocket, from which will escape a rouble—perhaps even, in certain events, a gold piece for ten roubles.'

'It is quite possible,' said Paul. 'I have a little money, though I am not one to part with it for nothing. The conversation with my old friend is, however, worth a rouble. I will hurt my ankle as you suggest.'

Paul walked past Peter's wood-stack presently.

'I have found Mitka,' he said. 'When the bell rings we shall have a good talk. Have you thought of the beginning? Tell me quickly the main idea.'

'The main idea is a boat. It is good that you have already made friends with Mitka; in him you may have full confidence. Now depart.'

Paul departed. When the exercising hour was nearly up, he contrived to be sauntering among the untidy heaps of billets as yet unstacked. He contrived also to make a very good show of slipping upon a rounded block of wood, and uttered a cry of pain, sitting down immediately, and holding his ankle with both hands.

The Eagle, who saw the little scene, ran up in much alarm; one or two others followed more leisurely.

'Have you hurt yourself?' inquired the Eagle. 'What is it—a twist?'

'Not quite so bad as it appears,' replied Paul. 'Go on being concerned—that's all right. The sprain is a sham. I want to stay and talk to the wood-stacker. Don't grin; they will think I'm shamming if you laugh at me.'

The Eagle arranged his features in a look of deep pity and sympathy.

'I will fetch water,' he said aloud, 'or shall we try the application of snow?'

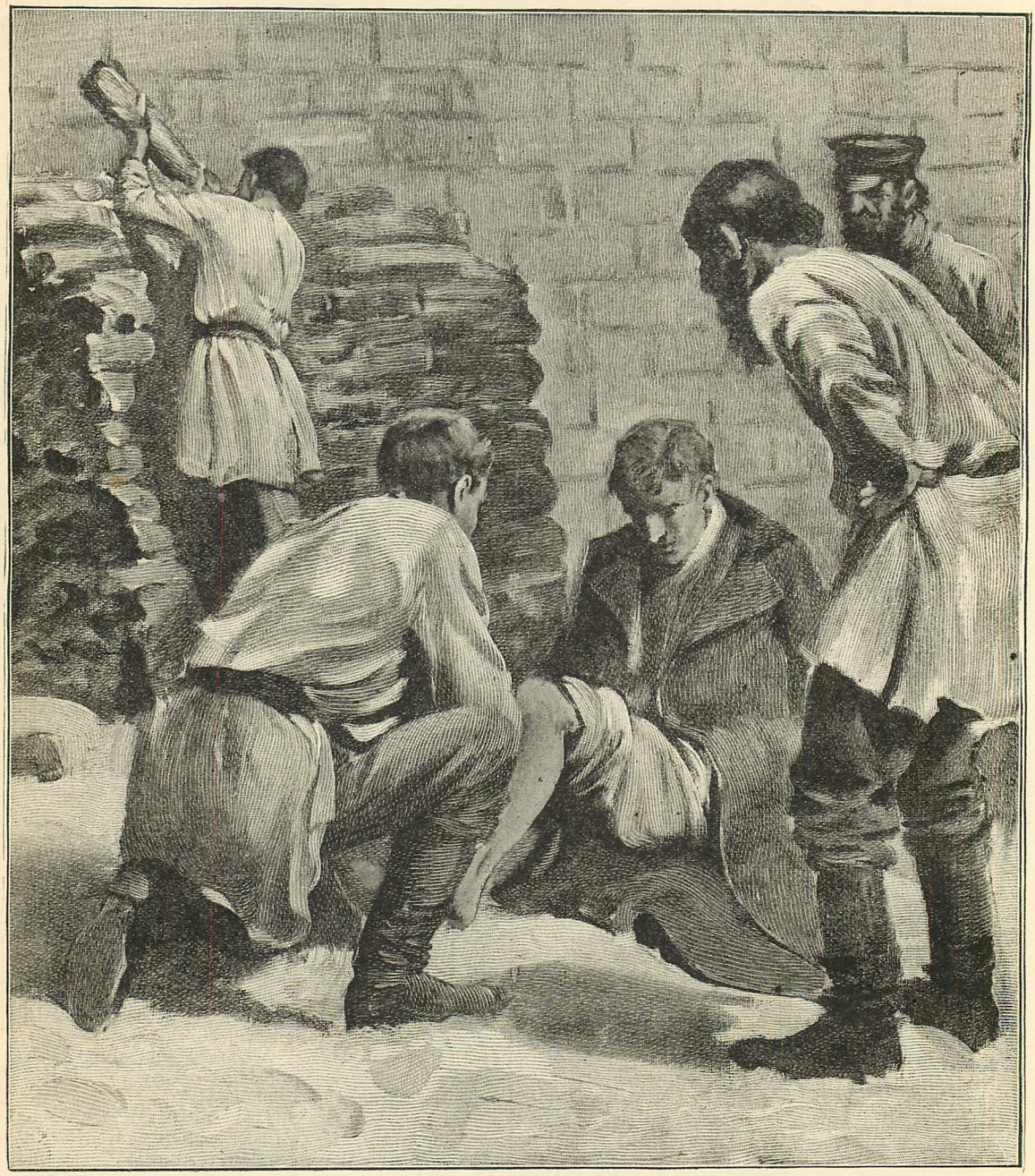
'Yes, snow,' groaned Paul. 'I cannot wait while you get water.'

A sympathetic convict unlaced Paul's elegant boot. The Eagle brought snow and dabbed it upon the ankle, which, thanks to violent rubbing on the part of its owner, was by now as red as a lobster.

Paul groaned, but said he thought the rubbing would do him good, and at that moment the bell rang, and the little group of sympathisers were obliged to depart to their several workshops. Only the soldier, Mitka, remained on the spot, together with the wood-stacker, who had not taken much interest in the accident, being too busy over his job, which was somewhat behindhand.

'Here, you lazy rascal,' said Mitka to Peter, when left alone with the two conspirators, 'have you no feeling for a suffering fellow-creature? Come and attend to this poor fellow's sprain. Take off the belt of your kaftan and bandage him, can't you, while I fetch water to damp it?'

Peter laughed, and placed a final billet upon the stack before ceasing operations. Then he came and began to bind the wounded joint while Mitka disappeared, and while the operation went on, Peter and his young master enjoyed an important conversation, the result of which was that upon Mitka's



"Paul said he thought the rubbing would do him good."

return, young Count Paul made the following remark:—

'Mitka,' he said, 'this is very kind of you, and the water will do me good. My friend here will have a hundred roubles to give you from me for this service, and—well—one or two other trifles which he is going to ask you to do for me. Meet him to-night at nine o'clock at Putilof's tea-shop in the town, and he will tell you all about it.'

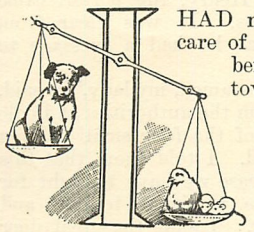
For the rest of the day Paul limped sadly—when he remembered to do so.

(*Continued on page* 159.)

NOBODY'S DOG.

(*Continued from page* 141.)

CHAPTER IV.



I HAD not lain very long, taking care of my master's handkerchief, before I saw Stubby running towards me.

'Here you are,' said he, breathlessly, lying down beside me. 'I've just stepped down to know what the fuss was all about, for I met old Jon and Dave, and Frank leading them, looking miserable enough, and caught sight of Martha inside the waggon, holding Luke's head in her lap. They went along the road towards the town. Then somebody came and fetched Rosie and the other little ones from your place. I say! why don't you go home and find out what's the matter? You are a lost dog now, that's what you are. Your house is empty, and your door is shut, and they've taken your master away. They will put him into that green garden round the church, I shouldn't wonder. Come along and see.'

'But what about my master's handkerchief?' I said.

'Well, if you have any fancy of that kind, and

"They tried sending me out with a nursemaid at one end of a string."

think you ought to watch it, I don't mind if I keep you company a bit,' said he. 'I can tell you a little about myself to while away the time. There's nothing so pleasant as thinking about one's own precious self. I have seen a lot of life, in town and country alike. I was a lost dog once. Once! twenty times! But if you take my advice, you'll keep out of towns. Why, a dog can't call his nose his own there; they fasten a beastly thing called a muzzle upon it, and put a collar round his neck, and drag him about with a chain. They tried sending me out that way

"I felt almost too weak to stand."

with a nursemaid at one end of a string and me at the other, but I watched my chance, and got away while the nursemaid was talking to a soldier.

'I ran along the street like mad, till a policeman caught me and took me to a great place called a "Dogs' Home," where I was shut up in a cage. Lots of people came in to look at us, barking and yelping to get out. A blind man bought me, and took me away. I did the collar and chain business for him till I was pretty sick of it. I had to sit all day on the edge of a pavement, holding a tin can in my mouth for the pennies that people put in. How my poor jaws ached! How cramped my legs got, longing for a run; but, if I stirred, he gave me a poke with his stick. My teeth hurt me so that I dropped the tin can, and all the money was lost. Then the blind man took me to a cellar where he lived, and flogged me badly and starved me for days. I stole a bit of bread that had fallen from his plate, and then he kicked me.

'I don't say that all blind men are bad men, but this blind man was a bad man. When next he took me out I was thin, and felt almost too weak to stand. He tied a money-box round my neck, and made me sit as usual. Sometimes a good-natured passer-by would give me a kind word and drop a penny into

the box; but the coppers did me no good, but only made the box drag more heavily at my sore neck.

'At last, one day a lady gave me a biscuit, and spoke to the blind man about me. He pretended to be very fond of me then, but she saw me shrink from him, and went away looking sad. Nobody helped me. That night, on our way home along the towing-path of a filthy canal, we passed some lads who were amusing themselves by throwing stones into the dirty water. The splash excited me; I forgot the chain, the box, and the blind man. I felt young again, and for a moment playful and happy, as if I still belonged to a kind young master, who long ago had played with me by a pleasant river-side. I leaped into the canal with chain, box and all, and in a moment was fighting for my life and sinking fast, for many coppers had been dropped into the box that day. I was just taking my last look at the sky, when there was another plunge. One of the lads had jumped in, and was swimming towards me. He was just in time to grip me firmly with one hand, while with the other he struck out for the bank. I was soon shaking myself on dry land again near my rescuer, while the blind man, foaming with rage, was demanding his box of money in loud tones and with many bad words, such as make dogs' hair stand on end, swearing that he didn't care what became of the nasty cur, he might drown and welcome, so long as the box was safe. It was handed to him with the collar and chain, and to my great joy I was carried off by the lad.'

(*Continued on page* 155.)

AGAINST ORDERS.

SEVERAL years ago a great business firm held a large quantity of cotton in New Orleans, which they instructed their agent in that city to sell when cotton should reach a certain price. The agent, however, believing that the price of cotton would go beyond the figure named by his employers, held on till he was able to sell at a price which netted forty thousand dollars more than he would have got for it if he had obeyed his orders from London.

He joyfully informed his employers of his success, supposing that they would share his satisfaction at the result. Imagine his surprise and chagrin when he received a reply, saying, in substance:—

'The forty thousand dollars you made by disobeying your instructions are not ours. They are yours. Take them. We cannot employ agents who exceed our orders. Mr. Blank, your successor, starts for New Orleans to-day.'

HEROINES OF THE CIVIL WAR.

IV.—HELD FOR THE KING.

IT does not seem like fifty years since that bright May morning, in the year 1643, when I was sitting with my four younger sisters in our pleasant rose-garden at Corfe Castle, in Dorsetshire, which old fortress our father, Sir John Bankes, Chief Justice of Common Pleas in London, had just purchased as a country residence.

We were busy with our seams, and our dear mother, Lady Mary Bankes, was reading aloud to us, as she was wont to do at such times; for, as she sometimes remarked, our thoughts might otherwise be idle, though our fingers were busy.

As we sat sewing, old Henry, the porter, came hobbling across the grass. It was clear from the look on his face that he had a message to deliver.

'Here is a band of forty seamen, my lady,' he said, 'who say they be come from the authorities at Poole to demand the surrender of the four small cannon that stand in the courtyard. I told them that this is our only armament in case we have to fight for the King, but they be rude, persistent fellows, and they will not be said nay. I shut the great door of the courtyard in their face, but they be clamouring at the outside o' 't, and threatening to beat it down, an' we listen not to their requests.

My mother started to her feet, the book she was reading fell unheeded to the ground.

'We can never give up the cannon,' she said, 'especially in my husband's absence; else what would befall if the rebels penetrated into these quiet parts, and laid siege to the castle?'

Old Henry looked uneasily at the narrow pathway which led from the sheltered rose-garden into the courtyard, as if he expected to see the sailors come rushing along it, pell-mell. 'Hark, how the rascals shout,' he said. 'Methinks in time they may batter down the door. Would it not be better, my lady, to listen to their demands?'

'Never,' answered my mother, with compressed lips. ''Tis but a trick. Folk say that the inhabitants of Poole are disaffected, and that they will openly declare for the Parliament ere long, and they would capture this old castle if they could; and, knowing that cannon are dangerous things, they would fain render us helpless by drawing our fangs. But instead of parting with the old guns, we will show the knaves that they can shoot. Haste thee, Henry, or thou, Susan—thy legs are younger—and call up our little garrison. We have thee, Henry, and Allan, and John, and Hugh the forester, and Gilbert the smith—five men in all—and seven serving-wenches, and six of ourselves. Not such a very weak garrison, albeit two-thirds of it be women.'

Sue, my youngest sister, a tall, slim maiden of fourteen, was wondrous fleet of foot, and in less time than it takes to tell, she had searched the castle and garden, and gathered every soul who was within the great outer wall that day. Even old Sybil, our nurse, was pressed into the service.

'Now,' said my mother, as we stood round her waiting for orders, 'we must mount these four cannon on the walls, and thou, Hugh, who art used to the handling of weapons, do thou load one and fire it over the heads of the sailors. Not to harm them, remember, but to let them see that they may not batter down my doors.'

'Twas done as she said. With much labour, for solid iron weighs heavy, we hoisted the rusty old guns on to the wall, and their carriages after them, and the seamen did not wait for a second shot when once the roar of Hugh's cannon sounded over

their heads. They turned and took the road to Poole as hard as their legs would carry them, while we stood on the wall and laughed at their discomfiture.

All but my mother—she did not laugh; and late that evening, when the younger girls were fast asleep, she entered the chamber which I shared with my next sister, Katherine. 'I have come to take counsel with you, Mollie and Kitty,' she said, 'for you are women grown, and it brooks not to treat you as children. I will not say aught to the serving-maids, or to your sisters; 'tis of no use hanging a sword over their heads that may never fall. But I fear me that our visitors of the morning were like the first blast of a trumpet—a foretaste of what is to follow. I would fain avoid sending word to thy father. His duty is with the King, and our walls are so thick that I think we could stand a siege if we had a few more men and a plenteous stock of provisions. Prince Maurice is in the neighbourhood; he will send us reinforcements if we ask him, and I purpose to lay in secretly a goodly store of beef and meal.'

With my mother, to think was to act; and by noon next day Gilbert, the smith, rode out of the castle on his way to the West, to find Prince Maurice and deliver a letter, which was securely hidden under his leathern doublet; and, before the week was out, sixty Royalist soldiers came marching into the courtyard, and took up their quarters in one of the wings of the castle, ready to defend it if need be. With them they brought baggage-waggons, laden with meal and grain, while my mother gave orders that a number of bullocks should be killed, and we maidens worked as hard as the serving-girls, salting the huge masses of beef, and storing them in great round tubs in the cool dungeons that served us for cellars.

Nor were our preparations in vain. A few weeks passed away, and then, without warning, the enemy appeared. When we retired to rest one dewy June evening, the landscape was as peaceful and quiet as it had ever been; but when we rose in the morning, six hundred Roundhead soldiers surrounded the castle, under the command of Sir Walter Earle, while from the little green knolls that studded the park, great black cannon pointed their gaping mouths at us.

Although the castle walls were thick, we were vastly outnumbered, and I think we might have been pardoned if our hearts sank for a moment. But whose heart could sink long at the sight of our mother's bravery? Calmly, as if she had been born a soldier, she summoned what she laughingly called her 'council of war.'

All we maidens were allowed to attend it—Kitty, and I, and the twins, and Sue; Captain Lawrence was there, of course—he who commanded Prince Maurice's soldiers—and one or two of his officers, and old Henry, and Gilbert the smith.

As we were deliberating—or, rather, as my mother and Captain Lawrence were deliberating—how to station the men to the best advantage, for the castle was large and rambling, and there was a great extent of wall to defend, we were interrupted by a message from without. Sir Walter Earle had sent to demand the surrender of the castle, adding, in a brutal way, that if we resisted, and he took it by force, he would allow no quarter.

'No quarter to women,' I heard Captain Lawrence mutter under his breath. 'The coward, it is easy to see to what side he belongs.'

But my mother took it more calmly.

'Say that Lady Bankes will never surrender: she will hold this castle for the King!' she said proudly—and then, as if nothing had happened, she turned her attention to the matter in hand. 'If thou and thy men can defend the middle ward of the castle, Captain,' she said, 'I warrant that we women-folk can answer for the upper ward. There be other ways of fighting than with powder and ball. There be thirteen of us all told, and I think that will suffice.'

But Captain Lawrence would not listen to her proposal; at least, he insisted that we should take with us to our post of duty some half-dozen of his strongest men, who could be trusted to obey my mother's orders, for he saw that she had a scheme of defence in her mind, and, without asking troublesome questions, he trusted her to carry it out.

Once in the upper part of the castle, she began to issue her orders, and, entering into her spirit, we women-soldiers obeyed her as though she had been King Charles himself.

Kitty and the twins were set to build great fires in the grates as if it had been mid-winter instead of mid-summer, while Sue and two of the younger serving-maids toiled up and down the steep stone stairs, fetching armfuls of fuel and filling kettles and pans with water.

To the older maids and myself fell a heavier task. Outside one of the narrow windows at the back of the castle, well hidden from the besiegers, was a ruinous chimney-stack. My mother bade us take the stones from it, and pile them on the floor inside the room; and I trow when we had completed our task, there was little skin left on any of our fingers! The soldiers she stationed at the windows or on the roof, to keep watch over the enemy's movements, and to let them see that we, on our side, were well prepared.

In the evening the assault began, and grievous and heavy fighting took place between the Roundhead soldiers and Captain Lawrence's men. We fought, too, and in this manner: whenever any of the enemy came underneath the windows of the rooms in which we were, and would have essayed to mount the walls, or raise ladders on which to climb, we would pelt them with the great stones which we had taken from the chimney-stack, or pour boiling water, or shovelfuls of red-hot embers, down on their heads, or perchance our few soldiers would lay hold of the end of a ladder, and hurl it outwards to the ground, and after a time they grew wary of approaching the part of the castle where we were.

And we won the day—of course we did! After all, our besiegers were but craven-hearted wretches, as was shown when, soon after, Captain Lawrence made a bold sally, and killed many of them, for they raised the siege, and departed in such desperate haste that they left all their cannon and ammunition behind them.

"We would pelt them with the stones, or pour boiling water down."

"They were all too astonished to say a word."

ONE EXTRA.

IT was Katie's fifth birthday, and Mother had made some plum-cake for tea. It was not very rich, for Mrs. Stanton did not approve of too many currants, for digestive as well as economic reasons.

'Mother, these currants do seem a long way apart,' said Tommy, the eldest. 'If they wanted to speak to each other they would have to shout.'

'Hush, rude boy!' said his sister Susie.

'Be thankful you have currants at all,' said Father, who had just come in from work, 'and more thankful still that you have a mother who gives them to you. Not like your poor cousin Chris, who has lost both his parents in six months. Why, *I* think this cake very good.'

'Wipe my whiskers, Mother!' burst in Baby Jim, whose supper for the first part consisted of bread and milk. 'Wipe my whiskers,' he repeated, imperiously, holding up a rosy mouth and cheek, very much covered with milk and crumbs.

They all laughed, Baby Jim the loudest, though perhaps he did not understand his joke in the very least. In the midst of the merriment, there was a sharp knock at the door. It was the telegraph-boy.

A sudden hush fell on the little kitchen. The yellow envelope was such a rarity in that home.

Yes, it was all right; no mistake. 'To Stanton, Purcell Road, Barnsby.'

Father opened it and read: 'Christopher arrives to-morrow evening. Please meet 6.10 train.'

There was no signature.

'No; no answer, my lad,' Father said to the waiting telegraph-boy, who had been making faces at Baby Jim, and sending him off into fits of laughter.

'Here's a strange thing!' said Father. 'What do you make of it, Mother?' He threw it across to her.

'Well, really!' she said. 'Sure enough it's our nephew, little Chris Turner, you know; we heard he had almost been elected into an orphanage. But when I wrote to his aunt yesterday she saw how pleased we were, I said (with your permission, you know) that if, after all, he should fail in this last election, she was to send him here for awhile. There isn't much room for him, it is true; but I couldn't let your sister's child be a burden on an aunt who is poorer than we are. So I expect he has failed in the election,' she went on, as her husband did not seem to know what to say. 'It's a pity; but, after all, there's nothing like a *real* home for a boy to remember. I am glad, John, and I will do as well for the little chap as if he were my own.'

'I hope you will never regret it, Mother. How will he get on with the others? He has been an only one, you know.'

All except Tommy had ceased to listen to what their parents were saying.

'Children,' said Mrs. Stanton, 'to-morrow evening you're going to have a new cousin. I hope you will make him welcome. He will be one extra, you know, and sometimes it isn't easy to make things go round as it is. Still, that can't be helped, and he must take us as we are. But I do think it would be good and nice for you all to give up some little thing for him, and make him feel he is one of you. He's a homeless orphan, remember, and you must try to be brothers and sisters to him.'

They all shouted with delight, all except Tommy.

'Mother, he shall have my new top.' 'He shall have my sugar-pig.'

'One at a time,' said Mother, proud of the generous instincts of her children. 'To-morrow morning, after school, if you like, you can all come upstairs and bring me your presents to put on his bed. I wonder, by the way, what yours is going to be, Tommy?' she said, pleasantly.

Tommy was hanging down his head. 'He will be one extra,' he said, sullenly. 'We can't do with any more.'

Tom was the eldest child by three years, and his mother feared sometimes she had made too much of him to start with. He was a good lad in many ways, truthful and industrious, but when he showed a spirit like this it made her sad.

'Selfish boy!' she said, quite sharply. 'So you think other things as well as currants will have to shout, do you? How would *you* like it if you were left without father and mother? How would *you* like it if your own father's own sister's children sneered at you for being just "one extra?"'

'Well, well,' said Father, thinking Mother had taken up the boy a little too sharply, 'I dare say Thomas will think very differently as soon as he gets a sight of young Chris.'

The next day, when Mrs. Stanton had finished making up the bed for Chris, she placed on it the children's offerings. There was Katie's rag doll ('in case he should be frightened in the dark'), Baby Jim's sugar-pig, Willie's blood-alley marbles, Lizzie's prize-book. Susie, elder-sisterly, feeling none of her girlish treasures quite suitable, had gathered a few cowslips, and put them in her own brown jar on the chest of drawers. Nothing from Tom!

'Ah, well!' thought Mrs. Stanton. 'Patience! That must tell in the long run.'

When the children came home from school in the afternoon they were all excitement, and hardly knew how to wait till train-time. They all went up to see the preparations, all but Tommy. He kept out of the way, and nobody thought of asking where he was.

It was getting on for five o'clock, and Mrs. Stanton said, 'I must get ready now and go to the station to meet little Chris. No, I don't want any of you with me. He will be best alone with me at first. You will see after the tea, Susie. Let everything be nice and bright and cheerful. There's a little cake left from yesterday. Put that by Chris's place. And you might do that bloater. He will be hungry after his journey.'

So Mother set off. As soon as she had gone, and the other children had run off to play, Master Tommy stole from his hiding-place behind the pig-sty, crept upstairs, and placed a neat little indiarubber ball among the other things on Chris's bed. Then with a light heart he ran down, and joined the others at their games. They wondered why he was so much better-tempered than usual.

Mother seemed a very long time. Was the train

late? They went along the road to meet her, good-naturedly quarrelling as to who should be the first to hold little Christopher's other hand.

Yes, there she was—but alone. Chris hadn't come! He must have missed his train. Mother was carrying a box, his luggage most likely, so that was all right.

'Me! me!' they all shouted. 'Let me carry his luggage. Where is he? Where is Chris? Why hasn't he come?'

Mrs. Stanton looked flushed and strange.

'Get away, all of you,' she said with a funny sort of smile. 'Don't come near. Don't speak to me till we are in the house.'

They followed her in solemn silence. What could it all mean?

'There's been a mistake,' she panted, as she set down the box. 'Stand off all round, and don't move.'

She uncorded the box. What queer little holes there were in it.

'Mew—mew—mew!'

Out stepped a magnificent half-grown black Persian cat! With his golden eyes he looked round with a lordly air, as if the place belonged to him. He pawed the hearthrug, and began to purr. He smelt the bloater, and sniffed towards the fireplace.

For a moment or two, they were all too astonished to say a word. Then they laughed; how they all laughed!

'Mother, what does it all mean?' they said, and made for him.

'Let him alone. Let him have his tea first,' said Mother, 'for he is hungry, and then we will try to find out about him.'

So while he was gobbling up a bit of bloater, and lapping some warm milk, they discussed what was to be done.

'I have it,' said Mother, examining the label. 'It's a wonder the porter gave it to me at the station; but there was no one else on the platform, and only this box put out, and I saw what I thought was our name on it. It did strike me as rather strange your Aunt Sally should have put his things in a dog-box, but I thought maybe it was for want of something better, and I was sort of bewildered at not finding the little lad himself. Well, that telegram wasn't for us, then, at all, but for the lady that's just come to the new house up the road. Her name is Mrs. Stainton. I expect the Post Office people don't know her yet. . . . No, no! let the cat wash himself, if he wants to. That's it.'

'Then his name's Christopher, too?' asked Tommy.

'Well, that's *long* for Kit, isn't it? Mrs. Stainton's friends perhaps put it for fun. I will go to her at once.'

Which she did, and her surmise being right, with much gratitude from Mrs. Stainton, Mr. Kit, or Christopher, was very quickly transferred to his proper destination.

It took the Stanton family quite a long time to recover themselves, after such a breaking down of their plans. What helped to settle them was that very evening's post, which brought a letter to say their proper Christopher had really got into the Orphanage, and his bringing up and education were thus most satisfactorily provided for, though 'he thanks his Auntie and Uncle Stanton very kindly all the same for thinking of him.'

'So now, children,' said Mother, 'you can come with me upstairs and take back your things. . . . Why, I have not seen this ball before? Whose is it?'

'Mine,' said Tommy, blushing. 'I put it there just after you went to the station.'

'My boy,' said his mother, with something like a sob, 'I am proud of you. I am proud to think that *all* my children, now, have been ready to make a little sacrifice and room for "one extra," whether that sacrifice was needed or not.'

A LONG WAY.

THEY started one morning in April
On an errand to town,
But Johnny would constantly dawdle
O'er meadow and down.
A pimpernel, cowslip, or daisy
Attracted him so,
That sometimes he'd cry,
Sitting down with a sigh:
'Oh, have we much farther to go?'
Then, peevishly pouting, he'd add with a frown:
'It seems such a very long way to the town!'

They started one day on their lessons,
And will it surprise
That Johnny would constantly dawdle,
To gaze at the skies?
A sun-ray, a cloud, or a swallow
Would win him by turn.
And sometimes he'd cry
To the teacher: 'O my!
Now is there much more I must learn?'
Then peevishly add with the tears in his eyes:
'I think it's a very long way to the prize!'

NOBODY'S DOG.

(*Continued from page* 150.)

'WAS the boy who saved you the one you have got now?' I asked.

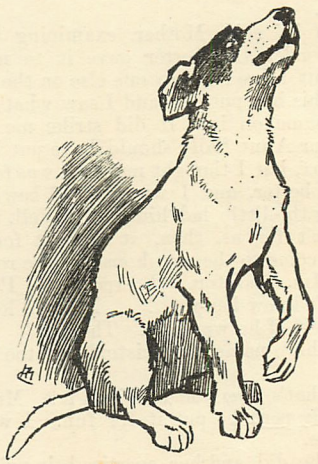
'Don't interrupt,' said Stubby, snapping at a grasshopper, and missing him. 'Oh, no, not that boy. I have had—let me see—three, four, five, six? At least eight boys before coming to the boy I've got now. Well, that same night, the boy who saved me, thinking nothing of his own risk, swopped me with another boy for a pigeon, two white mice, and a very sticky piece of toffy. This boy kept me for a fortnight, and then parted with me to a school-mate for a penknife with fourteen blades, and a broken cricket bat, and so on. I can't count up all the boys now, but they were all very rough, very poor, often very hungry, but always good to me, going shares in everything, down to bites out of the same pieces of bread, bite and bite alike. After the blind man, boys were bliss.

"I found that door closed and padlocked too."

'I drifted back to the Dogs' Home again. This time a gentleman bought me, who rode upon a bike. Don't you ever give yourself to a man who rides on a bike. The first day I rather liked it, and rather enjoyed the first ten minutes of running; then I began to feel bored, next weary beyond all that barks can say, and lastly, what I began to endure, no howls can describe.

'Away the horrible thing flew, the dust half smothering me. I dared not stop for a drink, though we passed many a cool road-side stream. What men are made of I can't imagine: sometimes I feel inclined to take a good bite and try. Iron and brass, I should think, like their machines. He never once looked over his shoulder, to see what had become of me. At last, something in my chest began thumping like a drum, I grew dizzy, my sight failed, I fell, and lay where I fell.

'Of course, my man and his bike were out of sight when I came to, look where I would. The only moving thing to be seen was the figure of a boy walking wearily towards me. I tried to get on my feet, but they were too sore, and the nails were torn and split from running on the hard roads so long. Before I could drag myself to the hedge, under which I thought I might lie down safely, the boy had time to reach it too. He was bare-footed and ragged, as well as tired and worn, but spoke



"I interrupted by a long, melancholy howl."

in a friendly way to me, and I replied in the same spirit.

'"I am sorry I have nothing to give you better than this, poor chap," he said, tossing me a crust and a bit of cheese-rind. After bathing his swollen and

dusty feet in the water of the ditch, and binding them up with some cool, broad leaves, he did the same for me, and we rested together under the shade of the trees. In the cool of the evening he went on, and I followed him.

'But that night the boy seemed ill, and could only crawl on his hands and knees. Then I, the dog, was able to help him, the human being. I walked slowly beside him, standing by him when he sank on the ground, and never leaving him till we came near houses. Inside the first gate I saw I ran, without caring whether they flung things at me or not, and told them about the boy as plainly as I could. Then I ran back to him, looking over my shoulder to see that somebody followed. The gates were the Nursery Garden gates, and the cottage was old Mother Brown's, and she sheltered us both.

'He was running away from a bad master, and so was I; he stayed on to work for her, so did I. And I work for her now. Don't I go the rounds every Saturday with the vegetables, and bark at tramps if they come inside the gates, and make myself generally useful? You may find it a satisfaction to know that you can rely on Mother Brown yourself, now that you are a lost dog. If you take my advice you'll just go home and make sure first, and then I don't mind taking you round and introducing you at Mother Brown's myself.'

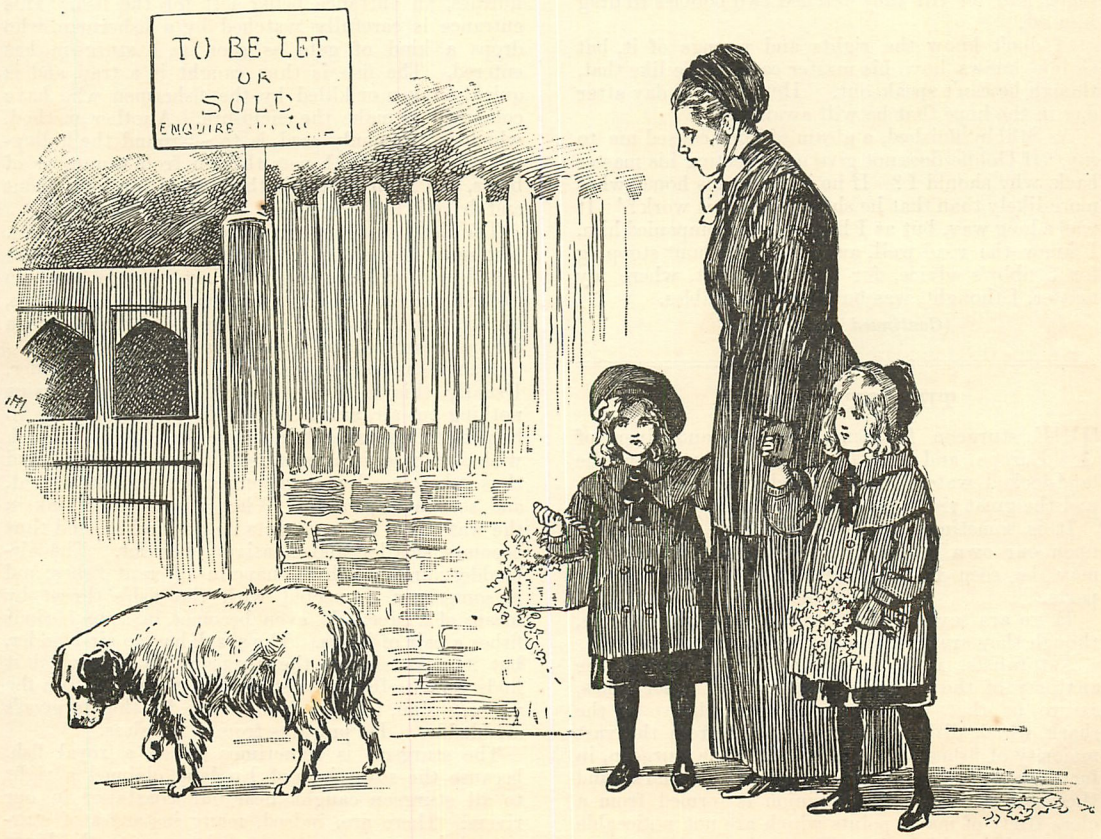
Really frightened by Stubby's words, I began to run up Break-neck Hill with him to Luke's cottage. It was too true. The windows and doors were tightly shut, the place looked empty and dead. I went round to the back, but found that door closed and padlocked too.

'I told you so,' said Stubby. 'Never mind! look at me—learn not to care a pin for being lost. Give me my liberty, that's all I ask, and just a mouthful to eat. After all, a man is a great bother to look after. I promise you half my supper and a bed at Mother Brown's, if you'll pluck up your heart and come along. As to Luke the mason——'

Here I interrupted by a long, melancholy howl.

Stubby fixed his great brown eyes on mine, as if he felt for me more than he cared to say. 'I don't make a fuss about the boy that belongs to me,' he said, 'which is perhaps a sadder plight than to feel as you are doing now. You see I have been so battered about, and have been through so many bitter partings, I can't feel the loss of a master as I once did. Don't take on. Perhaps he'll come back. Look over there—do you see that?'

Towards the church, on the other side of the road,



"In front walked a grave-looking spaniel."

a small group of people were approaching, on their way into the beautiful, grassy grounds. There were three: a nursemaid, slowly leading two little girls. All three were dressed in black, while in front of them walked a grave-looking spaniel, with long, trailing golden ears, and head hanging low. They turned in at the little churchyard gate, mournfully and silently, and we saw them no more.

'I don't go into the churchyard often myself,' said Stubby. 'I find that I get chivied out again with stones. Even that lazy old Moody at the "Hand-in-Glove" finds it worth while to come out and "hish" at me; and yet they let that old Goldie lie there for hours together every day, without disturbing him.

'Goldie lost his master, and has got some fancy into his head that his man sleeps there, and will wake up again. Those are his master's children and their nurse that you saw going to put flowers where the man lies, for some odd reason or other.

'Goldie loved his master in that insane fashion that some dogs do, and can't forget him, though it is ever so long ago, as we dogs count time, that they found the man beside his broken bicycle, just as he had fallen, and Goldie lying on the top of him, trying to keep the body warm. He would not let any one come near, but, though he is as soft as an old sheep, raged and bit till they fetched two bobbies to drag him off.

'I don't know the rights and wrongs of it, but Goldie knows how his master came to lie like that, though he can't speak out. He lies there day after day in the hope that he will awake.'

As Stubby finished, a gleam of hope caused me to say, 'If Goldie does not give up expecting his master back, why should I? If he is not at his home, what more likely than that he should be at his work?' It was a long way, but as I had often accompanied him, I knew the road well, and set off, without stopping for Stubby's advice, for Crofton Court, where my master, I thought, was building new stables.

(*Continued on page* 163.)

THE STURGEON.

THE sturgeon frequents the seas and rivers of Europe and North America, especially the land-locked waters of the Black and Caspian Seas, and the great rivers flowing into them.

It is sometimes caught in the nets of fishermen upon our own coasts, and occasionally a specimen may be seen in the fishmongers' shops of our ports.

There are several kinds, which vary much in size, though they are very similar in appearance.

Naturalists, who have carefully compared the anatomy of the sturgeon with that of other fishes, assure us that this fish is a near relative of the shark, which differs in many respects from the vast majority of fishes which we know. The sturgeon, in fact, seems to form a link between the sharks and these other fishes. This opinion is formed from a close study of many points which are not noticeable to an ordinary observer. The skeleton of sturgeons is not made of bone, like that of most fishes, but of cartilage or gristle; and this is one of the points in which the sturgeon resembles the shark. In outward appearance, however, the sturgeon differs from the terrible white shark a good deal. It is long and slender, and it has a thin and pointed snout, with a small mouth in which there are no teeth. It is not, therefore, a dangerous fish, though it sometimes attains an enormous size. Single fish, measuring eighteen feet in length and weighing eight or nine hundredweight, have occasionally been caught upon the shores of Russia; while specimens eight or nine feet long, and two or three hundred pounds in weight, have been caught upon the coasts, or in the rivers, of Great Britain. In one instance, an American sturgeon was caught in the Firth of Tay.

The sturgeon lives upon small fish, shell-fish, and such soft-bodied animals as it can find at the bottom of the seas which it frequents. Owing to its habit of keeping near the bottom, it is not often caught far out at sea. But, at certain periods, it turns into the rivers to deposit its eggs in fresh water, and at those times it is caught in great numbers, by the inhabitants of Russia and Siberia, who value its flesh very highly, and consume large quantities. The fish is taken in nets, which are set up for that purpose in the rivers, especially the Volga, the Don, and the Danube. In some cases enclosures are made with hurdles, an entrance being left for the fish. This entrance is carefully watched by a fisherman, who drops a kind of gate as soon as a sturgeon has entered. The fish is thus caught in a trap, and is quickly taken or killed by the fishermen who have combined to make the enclosure. Another method, which is commonly used, is to surround the hiding-place of a fish with nets thrown from a number of boats, and then to startle the fish with a loud shout and drive it into the nets.

The flesh of the sturgeon resembles veal in taste. Not only is it eaten fresh, but large quantities are salted and pickled, so that they may be sent to distant places. Salted sturgeon was, at one time, highly prized in England. The roe of the sturgeon also is preserved, and is known as caviare.

Many fishes possess an air-bladder or swim-bladder. Usually this is a closed bladder, which contains nothing but air, and it is used by the fish simply to help it to rise or sink in the water. When the fish wishes to rise, it allows the bladder to expand, and thus it becomes larger in comparison with its weight, and so floats upwards. When it wishes to sink in the water, the fish contracts its air-bladder, and thus becomes smaller and relatively heavier. The air-bladder varies much in shape in different fishes, and is sometimes connected with the fish's throat by means of a tube. It even becomes in some curious fishes a pair of lungs. The shark has no air-bladder, but its near relative, the sturgeon, has one, which it finds very useful in assisting it to rise and fall in the water. Man, too, has found a use for the sturgeon's air-bladder. He prepares from it isinglass.

The sturgeon is sometimes called a royal fish, because the sovereigns of England claimed a right to all sturgeon caught near our coasts or in our rivers. There are, indeed, many instances of sturgeon being sent as gifts, by fishermen, to the kings and queens of England.

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 148.)

CHAPTER XVII.

AT Putilof's tea-drinking shop in the little town of Yermatsky, Peter met Mitka that night, the latter being off duty that evening. An important consultation was held in a private room, and money changed hands.

'If I could be in two places at once,' Mitka remarked, 'the thing might be done much cheaper, but there are Petka Gromof, Kolia Shulof, and Gregory Bastuchef to be satisfied. Petka and Kolia will be all right, I know, for twenty-five roubles a-piece, but I never know how far one can trust Gregory.'

'Must we trust him at all?' asked Peter.

'He is always on night duty at the water-gate—he sleeps in the little sentry-box you have seen just outside the yard.'

'Well, we cannot afford more than twenty-five—let him understand that—it is take or leave: twenty-five rouble notes are not to be picked up out of the gutter.'

'I will do my best. It is understood, then, that in case of full success, you, who will be in the boat with the rest, will hand me over a further sum of a hundred roubles. Supposing that you play me false at the last moment?'

'In that case it is easy for you to take revenge at once by raising an alarm. You need not fear, I shall not play you false.'

Mitka had a good deal to say to his accomplices later in the evening. He had been able, he said, to arrange with Petka and with Kolia upon payment of five roubles cash and a promise of twenty more. Gregory was more difficult to deal with.

'Why should I agree to allow these fellows to escape?' he asked. 'Why should I not give information, on the contrary, that you are false and dishonest?'

'Because you are not so foolish or so cruel. These prisoners have done nothing to deserve such a fate as theirs,' said Mitka, 'and are you so rich that you can afford to refuse twenty-five roubles when the money is offered you? Twenty-five roubles is a useful little sum.'

'Fifty roubles is a better,' said Gregory.

'Oh, so that is your little game! I am sorry I cannot oblige you; there is not enough profit in the contract which I have undertaken. My friends are not very rich, it seems, and cannot afford to pay high sums. At the same time, twenty-five roubles is, as I say, a useful sum.'

'What of your own share of the spoil? Petka and Kolia and I are to have each twenty-five, you tell me; well, what are you getting yourself?'

'A little more, naturally, since I am taking all the arrangements upon myself, but not enough to make a difference. Come—I will promise to get my friend to add ten roubles to your share. I will represent to him that your position is very responsible.'

'Fifty,' said Gregory, stolidly; 'not a farthing less; half payable now; half, an hour after the event. Those are my terms and my last word.'

Mitka finally agreed, exacting a condition that Gregory should take oath that he would not tell the others that he was getting more than they.

When next young Paul Stirinof took exercise in the yard of Yermatsky prison, he seemed able to walk very little. The soldier in charge permitted him to take the air wrapped in his handsome fur *shooba* (cloak), seated on two billets of wood with his back resting against the stack pile. He was allowed to maintain this comfortable position on condition that he did not converse with the labourers.

Paul did not converse with *them*, but once, as Peter passed him with a quantity of billets of wood in a barrow, the old man whispered, as he trundled his load close to Paul's outstretched legs, 'Be ready: next time I pass, there is going to be a little accident; the wheel of my barrow is going to slip from this board, and the contents will upset over and about you; there will be a little present amongst the billets for you.'

Peter contrived to convey this information as he stopped for a moment to mop his face.

Two convicts just then stopped and inquired after Paul's ankle; they added one or two commonplaces about the coldness of the weather, and passed on. The Eagle was walking busily up and down, keeping intentionally as far away from Paul as possible by instructions, for both considered that it would be wise to avoid all appearance of anxiety to be together, or to talk more than usual, in case any suspicious person should imagine that they were plotting.

'I dare say it's my guilty conscience that makes me think they might suspect us,' Paul had said, laughing; 'but it won't hurt us to keep apart a bit just now; you shall know all there is to know presently.'

The Eagle had been quite of the same mind, and for the last two days the two friends had not seemed to take much notice of one another.

When Peter came along with his barrow presently, trundling the wheel quickly along the track, which consisted of single boards laid along the snow as evenly as they would lie, the barrow jerked over the edge just as it passed close to the spot where Paul sat with his back to the pile of stacked fuel. The labourer attempted to right the barrow, but failed; over went his load, and the billets were scattered upon and about Paul.

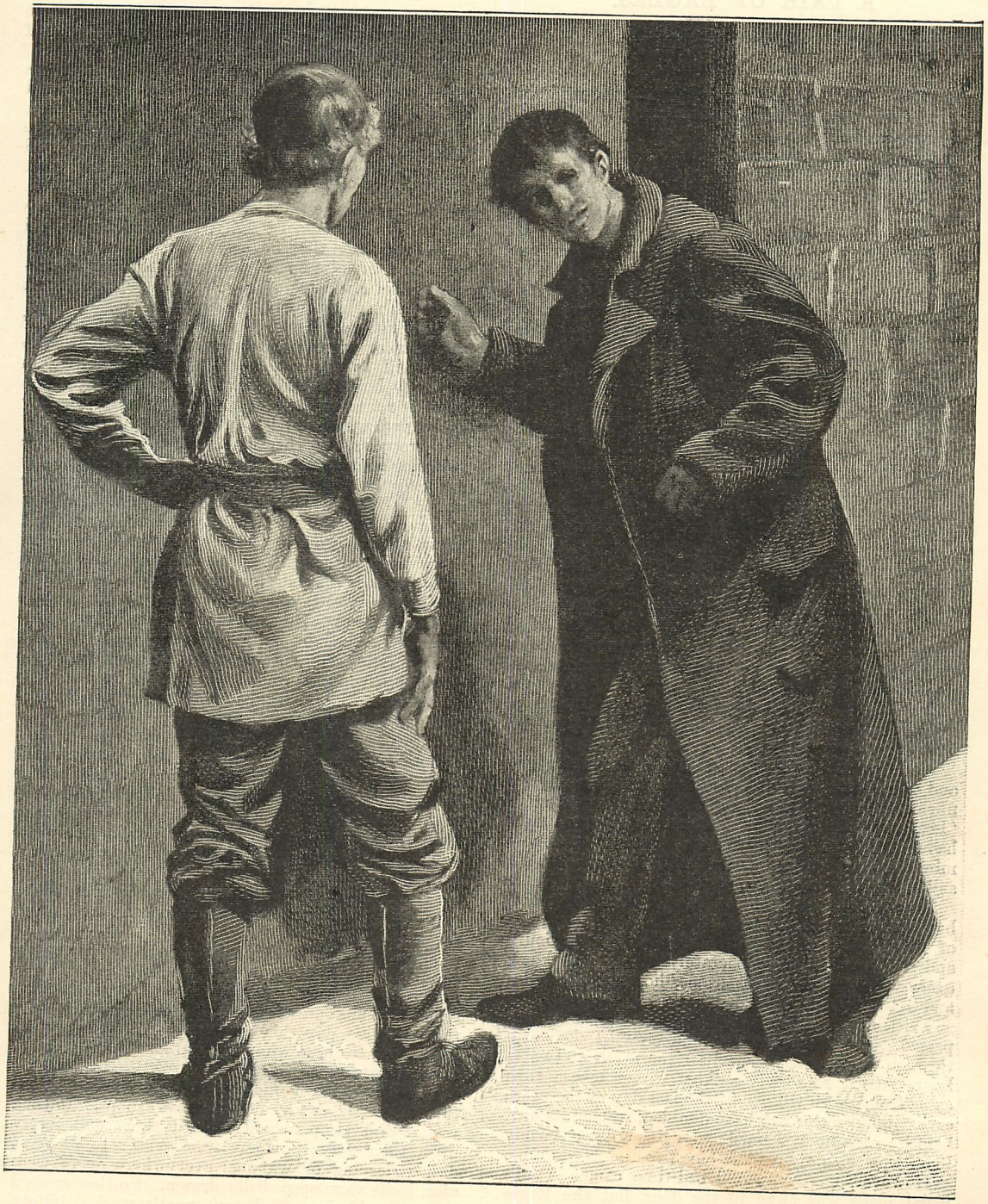
Most fortunately his 'injured' ankle was not touched by the falling billets, though some of them only just missed!

Paul distinctly saw a grey-coloured envelope among the scattered blocks of wood, and contrived to cover it with an end of his fur coat. Then he shifted his position, as though to withdraw out of the way of the labourer, and cleverly sat down upon the document.

Many fellow-convicts came running up, together with a warder or two, glad of the mild excitement of assisting to pick up the billets and condoling with their injured companion—if he was injured. They found Paul apparently beside himself with anger, and abusing the offending labourer in violent language.

(*Continued on page* 162.)

"Over went his load."



"Paul knocked cautiously."

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 159.)

CHAPTER XVIII.

WHEN Paul obtained an opportunity to read old Peter's letter, he found its contents to be of the greatest importance.

'I have made all arrangements,' wrote the old man, 'for two in the morning of Friday next, which will be New-year's Day. That night, being New-year's Eve, will be passed in revelry by most of those who might otherwise interfere with us. You have nothing to do but to lie awake; both of you must choose, that night, positions as close to the door of the dormitory as you can get. On that night Mitka will be on dormitory duty. Mitka will softly open the door at two a.m. in order to see that all is well with the convicts. He will look in, and will leave the door slightly ajar. Instantly you will take the opportunity, creep along the floor, and dart out. Mitka will close and lock the door behind you. There will be no further difficulties; Mitka has the key of the inner corridor, Petka of the outer corridor; Kolia will be ready to let you out of the door which leads into the exercising yard, and at the water-gate is Gregory. All these men have been carefully instructed, and thoroughly understand what is wanted. Probably you will not see any of them, excepting Mitka, who will see you as far as the boat itself, where I shall be ready to take you over from his hands. I hope for the success of our enterprise, and for the good faith of Gregory, who is the only one of whom I have any fear. In case you should have forgotten the days of the week, you will receive this on Wednesday morning. It is in the night which is between Thursday and Friday, and at two o'clock in the morning, that all these things are to happen.'

Paul contrived to let the Eagle see this letter, and the Eagle, whose education had been sadly neglected, spelt it out by degrees and very slowly. 'Learn it by heart,' Paul had instructed him, 'as I have done, and afterwards tear it into the most minute pieces, which we shall get rid of, half each, as best we can, when unobserved.'

The Eagle learned his lesson as well as he could, but his brain was not used, like Paul's, to exercises of this kind, and he found the task very difficult, and performed it only moderately well. Paul knew every word of the 'instructions,' however, by heart, and did not forget them.

Neither Paul nor the Eagle knew how Thursday passed. The hours dragged and crawled their way through the long day; surely never a set of twelve hours passed so slowly as that dozen whose turn came from morn till eve of the last day of the year; each minute seemed to have doubled, trebled its own length; each hour seemed as long as a day; the day itself was certainly a week long!

However, it passed, and bed-time came. Paul's usual place was close to the door, but the Eagle slept, as a rule, at the other end of the great dormitory. To-night, however, he had contrived to exchange places with an acquaintance whose usual berth was close to that of Paul.

'We want to spend the last night of the year together, and talk of our homes and friends,' he told his obliging friend. 'We are chums, you know, and both of us feel a bit sentimental to-night.'

The convicts slept in rows upon long platforms raised only a few inches from the ground, and divided into squares about the size of small beds. Upon these, close to the door and adjoining one another, Paul and the Eagle lay this night and whispered occasionally in order to make sure that each was awake. Once or twice some neighbour, disturbed in his rest by their murmuring, raised his head and bade them be quiet. Once Mitka looked in and remarked that he heard whispering. 'There will be complaints and punishments if it occurs again,' said Mitka. 'Sleep all, like wise men; what is the night given for but to sleep?'

'To feast,' said some one aloud, 'the last night of the year, at any rate,' a remark whereat those who were still awake laughed. All this happened in the early hours of the night. By eleven there was scarcely a man awake. At midnight all slept soundly except two who knew better than to fall asleep.

There was no further fear of Paul and the Eagle relapsing into slumber. They lay with beating hearts awaiting the signal for departure. Would it never come? Would the night never end? Had not some one made a mistake? Mitka, perhaps, had fallen asleep—what a disaster that would be!

Suddenly, when their patience was nearly at an end, the door opened slowly. It opened just wide enough for a head to be thrust through the aperture—Mitka's head. He looked in, yawned, and withdrew his head again, half closing the door. A chink of dim light still entered the dormitory from the corridor beyond, a welcome proof to four anxious eyes that Mitka, so far, had acted strictly in accordance with the programme arranged.

'Now,' whispered Paul, scarcely audibly.

Both men noiselessly removed their blankets and crept, snakelike, towards the door. One behind the other, they crawled through; neither made the slightest sound, and Mitka stood ready to close the door behind them, locking it and slipping the well-oiled bolt. Some one in the dormitory sat up and rubbed his eyes.

'Did I dream it,' he thought, 'or did I see some one slink out of the door which opened to let him through?'

This inquisitive individual took the trouble to get up and walk to the door, which he tried. It was locked and bolted. 'I must have imagined it,' he reflected; and presently he fell asleep again. On the following day this prisoner's evidence was very interesting to those who inquired into the disappearance of certain convicts.

Like ghosts of the night, Paul and the Eagle fled through corridors and deserted workshops. In each was a dim lamp, which lighted them sufficiently upon their way; nowhere was warder to be seen, either sleeping or waking; everywhere doors were ajar, locks were open, bolts drawn. So they crossed the yard, skirting old Peter's neatly stacked billets, and reached the water-gate. This, unlike the rest of the doors which had stood between our friends and freedom, was closed and fastened. Mitka had by

this time returned to his post, having parted with Paul and the Eagle at the outer corridor, with a hurried hand-shake and the muttered thanks of the fugitives, and a fifty-rouble note in addition to the sum agreed upon.

Paul knocked cautiously at the gate. Apparently Gregory was ready and waiting, and Peter was in the boat close by.

'Who is it?' asked his voice.

'Stirinof—all is well.'

'All will be still better,' said Gregory through the gate, 'if you promise me a further payment of twenty roubles when the gate is opened. I am dissatisfied with the sum received.'

'Rubbish!' said Peter from outside. 'Refuse it, Count Paul. He is a cunning rascal, but this time he shall find that he has over-reached himself.'

'Shall I?' rejoined Gregory. 'My hand is on the lever which rings a large bell in the outer corridor; remember that, my friend.'

'Ah!' said Peter, 'I had forgotten the bell. Well, then, if we cannot help it, we must give him the money. Stop! I will get out of the boat and speak to you, Gregory, when you slip the bolt.'

Paul heard old Peter step out of the boat and the rustle of rouble-notes being counted out. Suddenly there came an exclamation, the sound of a struggle, muffled cries—then a splash!

(*Continued on page* 170.)

PERSEVERANCE.

THE baffled waves, though often they retire,
On to the shore creep ever nigh and nigher;
Onward they flow, mighty, resistless, grand,
Until at last they cover all the strand.

Not all at once the mightiest deeds are done,
Not all at once the longest race is won;
But true endeavours gain their end at last,
And, conquering, smile at failures that are past.

NOBODY'S DOG.

(*Continued from page* 158.)

CHAPTER V.

I WAS very tired by the time that I reached the half-built stables at the back of Crofton Court, where my master had been working. He was not there. In vain I snuffed every inch of the ground, especially about the pile of great stones which bore the mark of his tools. But I had a patient nature, and lay down to wait beside a tall hedge of towering trees, which divided the bit of trodden, dusty ground from my lady's flower-garden.

I could hear the pleasant voice of Lady Crofton, and the jingle of cups and saucers from the shady summer-house on the other side. Many a soft word had she given me, when she came out with Sir John to see how the new building was getting on, and noticed me lying on Luke's jacket. Presently I plucked up courage to wriggle through a hole between the tree-trunks, and creep meekly up to her feet, for she was a very good, though a very grand lady. As I did so, and she was stooping to pat me, a manly voice cried out a hearty greeting, and Lady Crofton rose from her rustic tea-table to meet her husband, Sir William.

'So thankful, Maggie, to shake off the town dust from my feet, and see something green again,' he said. 'It is three weeks since I have drawn a long breath. Pah! the very air of London is dirty.'

Lady Crofton handed him a cup of tea.

'And now, any news? All well at home?'

'All well,' answered my lady, 'and not much home news. But a sad thing has happened in the village. Poor Mr. Marjory has met with an accident. He was killed by a fall, as they think, from his bicycle—a side-slip or something. You know that dear old dog of his?'

'Clumber spaniel, white with yellow points? Yes, what of him?'

'I always think that old Goldie the loveliest dog I ever saw, and Mr. Marjory loved him so dearly. You know the crawling pace he rode his bicycle at, so that he shouldn't tire Goldie? On this particular day, Mr. Marjory's body was found lying in the road, and Goldie was stretched upon him, defying the whole world to touch his master. Fancy, that gentle old thing!—his master was quite dead. They had to take Goldie away by force, and chain him up in the stables behind the "Hand-in-Glove." The body was taken there too, for the inquest. Poor Mrs. Marjory! She and the two little girls were at the window watching—for he was late for dinner—and saw him carried by to the inn.'

'Then I have lost a good agent,' said Sir William, 'and the poor will miss him. Marjory was a good fellow. What passed at the inquest?'

'Some of the jurymen were of opinion that he fell, others thought that a passing cart knocked him down. But the favourite idea was that Mr. Marjory was run down by a motor-car or a motor-bicycle by some coward, who left him to lie where he fell. Nothing else could have got away so fast. The Coroner said that prompt help would have saved his life; and so a verdict of "manslaughter" was passed against some person unknown. But, of course, they won't catch the wretch.'

'What dog is this?' said Sir William, noticing me for the first time, as I wagged my tail beseechingly.

'I was coming to that,' said my lady. 'Troubles never come alone, and this little dog reminds me of another village tragedy. Our mason, Luke Bramble, is lying in the hospital at Bigtown, between life and death—also from a road accident.'

'Was he the victim of a heartless ruffian, too?'

'Why, no. It seems to have been chiefly the fault of Frank Sage, brother to that nice Mrs. Bramble. I think he is a great anxiety to Luke and his wife. They have him to live with them to keep him from drinking himself to death, as he would do if he were left to himself. He left the two handsome horses from the brewery standing outside the door, while he sat inside the "Hand-in-Glove." These country horses are not all used to motor-cars yet. The pair took fright at one which passed them, and Luke, in trying to save them, was so badly hurt that the doctor ordered him off to the nearest hospital at once.

'When I drove in to make inquiries, I found their cottage all shut up, and that Luke's poor distracted wife, after making hasty arrangements with a neighbour to take the children, had gone with him. The neighbour seemed a nice body, and was in tears about the whole affair, and especially because the little dog was missing, of whom the whole family were very fond. And here the poor little thing is. He has wandered out here, no doubt, to look for his master.'

'It was a gallant thing for the man to do. Is he likely to live?'

'They seem to think not.'

'The owner of the horses ought to reward him handsomely if he does,' said Sir William.

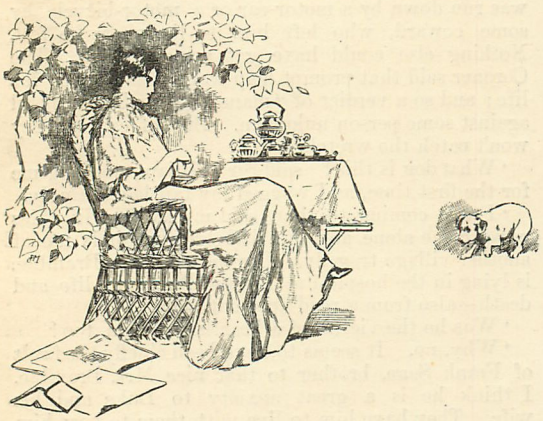
'It will be a dreadful thing for his family if he dies. What a grand work it would be if you could put a decent man and his wife into that "Hand-in-Glove" to keep it as a coffee-house,' said Lady Crofton.

'It has been talked of,' said Sir William. 'Old Moody's licence has not long to run now—I am his landlord, you know. But there is the dressing-bell. You had better tell one of the men to tie the dog up. It's a good dog; not thorough-bred, but a nice cross-bred thing enough.'

'I am glad they have allowed him to keep his tail,' smiled my lady, 'so that he has something to laugh and talk with. The barbarous days are gone when they used to mutilate every unhappy little puppy. I never see that funny, worldly-wise old Stubby Brown in the village without pitying him, because he must do all his conversation with his eyes and ears.'

'By-the-bye, what is going to be done with Marjory's spaniel? I shouldn't mind buying that dog.'

'It's very touching, William, but they say the dog won't leave the grave for long. How strange it



"I plucked up courage to creep to her feet."

seems that he should know all, and not be able to tell a word. Poor Mrs. Marjory has got hold of an idea that her husband met with foul play, and wants to offer a reward.'

'It won't do a bit of good,' said Sir William.

'The nurse told me that it was piteous to watch the meeting between her and the dog who last saw her husband alive. The dog sat down opposite her, as if trying to tell some secret, with just such a dejected look as this little terrier's face has now, as if to say, "Do you know where he is gone?" till she could bear it no longer, and cried over the dog till his coat was wet with her tears.'

'We will see, at any rate, that this poor little chap gets a good master,' ended Sir William, and was crossing the lawn when a stranger in leather gaiters stopped him. The two men stood talking together, while I sorrowfully crept a little closer to the lady's feet.

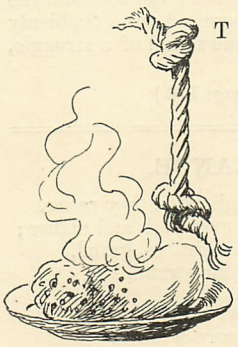
'Poor little waif!' she said, half to herself; 'can anything be more touching than your trust in me? It shall not be misplaced.'

(*Continued on page* 173.)

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

True Tales of the Year 1807.

IV.—PALL MALL LIGHTS.



'T was past six o'clock on a cold November evening in the year 1807 when Roger Lester, a Westminster schoolboy, rushed hastily up the steps of his home, an old house in the Horseferry Road.

'You *are* late, Roger!' said his younger sister, coming out into the hall as she heard the door slammed in Roger's noisy fashion.

'Late! yes, of course I'm late,' said the boy with a laugh, as he threw his school-books down on the table, 'and so would you be late, Katie, if you had seen what I have seen!'

'What was it, Roger?' said Katie, eagerly—'a fight?'

'Pooh! a fight,' said Roger; 'you can see a fight any day at our school! No, it was something newer than that, I can tell you.'

'Well, do tell me, then!' said Katie.

'You wouldn't believe it,' said her brother. 'I wouldn't myself unless I had seen it with my own eyes.'

'Yes, yes! I will believe it if you tell me; so begin, Roger, do,' pleaded Katie.

'Well, you know how the men have been digging up the road in Pall Mall lately?'

'Yes,' interrupted Katie, 'I know; we went down there last Saturday. Go on.'

'One of our fellows told me that those pipes we saw laid were gas-pipes, and that this evening Pall Mall is to be lighted with gas instead of the oil-lamps that we have everywhere.'

'Gas! gas! What's that?' asked Katie, looking up in amazement at this new word.

'Oh, well! gas is just gas,' said her brother, vaguely; 'it is somehow made from coal, and

The First Gaslight in Pall Mall.

doesn't it give a light? It fairly dazzles you! It is quite different from oil-lamps'—and Roger gazed disdainfully out of the window at a dim oil-lamp, which was hung across the street on a rope.

'Oh, I wish I could see it!' said Katie, sighing; 'boys always see everything!'

'You can see these lamps,' said Roger; 'they are to be lighted every night. I will take you into Pall

Mall next Saturday evening, and then you will not think much of oil-lamps after seeing gas, I can tell you'—and Roger nodded his head and looked very wise.

'But tell me more about it, Roger. Did the men light the gas, as they do the oil-lamps, by letting down the rope and trimming the wicks?'

'No!' almost shouted Roger. 'There's no wick to these lamps, and it does not take a second to light them. There they are! high above your head on posts by the road-side. A man puts a ladder against the posts, holds a light over the lamp, there is a sort of puff, and a bright light comes in a minute. The whole of Pall Mall was lighted up in next to no time.'

'Does it cost much?' asked Katie, thoughtfully.

'Oh, yes, I believe it does, and it's awfully dangerous, so our fellows say, and that's why it will never be used to light houses; it can only be used for streets and outside places.'

'Who invented gas, I wonder?' went on Katie.

'Oh, I know all about that,' said Roger, importantly; 'that chap I was with this evening told me a lot. He says people have known about gas for ever so many years, and that there are big gas-works in Birmingham belonging to Bolton and Watt, and at the time of the Peace of Amiens a few years ago, the whole front of their factory was illuminated with gas, and crowds of people from miles away came to see it.'

'Why didn't we have it in London? London is bigger than a little place like Birmingham,' said Katie.

'The gas had such a horrid smell, people wouldn't have stood it in streets,' said Roger; 'but a German fellow—Winsor is his name—has found out a way of purifying the gas. I couldn't smell it a bit to-night; and, if it answers in Pall Mall, all London may one day be lighted with it.'

'Oh, will it really?' exclaimed Katie. 'How strange it will seem! But I dare say it will be fifty years or more before that comes to pass.'

Then the bell rang for supper, and at the supper-table Roger had again to explain to his parents the wonderful sight he had seen that evening.

So great was the effect on every one of the first street to be lighted with gas!

The new light, however, only came into general use very slowly, and it was considered quite an event when, in 1813, gas-lamps were fixed on Westminster Bridge. However, three years later, gas was commonly used in all the streets of the Metropolis.

Some shops, too, began very cautiously to employ this new lighting. A large print-shop was the first, and here the brilliant light so attracted the attention of a duchess who was making purchases that she begged to buy the lamp with its light, and have it taken to her carriage there and then!

One reason why gas was at first so little used in houses was that its properties were imperfectly understood, both by the public and the men employed in putting in the necessary fittings, and accidents were at first frequent. The men laid badly fitting pipes which leaked, and the public, on their side, could not get out of the habit of blowing out the gas as they would a candle when they no longer wanted it.

However, in time people learned wisdom, and now, after gas has been a hundred years in use in shops, factories, houses, and churches, and may be said to have been brought to its highest state of perfection, it bids fair to be rivalled by the electric light. Perhaps that wonderful light may one day be eclipsed in turn by something even brighter, for we live in a marvellous age, and have made more scientific progress in the last hundred years than in many other hundreds that preceded it.

HOW LOUISE KEPT HOUSE.

LOUISE MILLER was fourteen years old, and inclined to be rather heedless and impulsive. She meant well, and tried hard to be good and please her mother, whom she loved dearly, but somehow she did not always succeed, for she was apt to do things on the spur of the moment, and sometimes caused a good deal of trouble which might have been avoided.

Louise's mother was a hard-working widow with three children, of whom Louise was the eldest. She loved her big daughter, but she sometimes sighed, and said to herself, 'I wish Louise were more reliable. A steady girl would be such a help to me.'

Now, it so happened that Louise's mother had an invitation from a married sister, who lived in the country, to spend the day with her. Mrs. Miller wanted very much to accept the invitation, for she felt that a good blow of fresh country air would do her good, but she hesitated, because she did not like to leave her children, especially as it was holiday-time.

'Why, Mother!' cried Louise, when she was told about her aunt's letter, 'of course you must go. I will take care of the others.'

Mrs. Miller looked thoughtful. 'I should like a holiday. But are you to be trusted, Louise?'

'Indeed I am, Mother,' replied Louise; 'I'm fourteen years old now, and quite able to look after things while you are away. Besides, you will only be gone a day.'

'Very well,' said her mother, 'I will go. Remember that I leave the children in your charge, Louise. Look after them; don't leave the house, and don't let Janie run about in the sun too much, for she is not strong.'

So, one hot July morning, Mrs. Miller left home, while Louise waved a cheerful good-bye to her from the doorstep.

'Now, what shall I do first?' said Louise to herself, turning away, and walking into the kitchen; 'wash up the breakfast things, I think. Tom can run my errands for me, and Janie will help in the house.'

But Tom, the only boy, a lad of eleven, said he had arranged to go into the neighbouring park, to play with a friend.

'How tiresome!' cried Louise, giving her brother a little shake; 'why can't you manage to do my errands first?'

'Because I can't, Spitfire!' said Tom, rudely; 'and now you have shaken me, I shan't, so there!' And he rushed out of the door before Louise had time to say another word.

'Nasty boy!' she said, feeling vexed; 'just like him to be so disobliging.'

But she never thought that, had she spoken to Tom quietly and politely in the first instance, he would probably have fallen in with her wishes, and not been rude at all.

The breakfast things washed up, Louise next made the beds wi h Janie's help, and dusted the rooms, feeling rather ruffled still by Tom's behaviour. This made her speak sharply to Janie, but when the little thing looked at her with tears in her brown eyes, Louise was overcome with remorse.

'Darling Janie!' she cried impetuously, kneeling on the ground, and putting both her arms round her sister, 'don't cry. I never meant to be so cross.'

And Janie, who was of a sweet and forgiving disposition, dried her eyes and kissed her.

Louise began to prepare the dinner; she cut up some vegetables, and put them in a saucepan on the gas-ring in the scullery, together with some mutton, to make Irish stew. Tom came in about one o'clock, healthy and hungry, and began to grumble a little because the dinner was not ready.

'I shan't be a minute,' said Louise, and hurried into the kitchen, where they were to have their dinner, with the steaming dish of stew.

Crash!

Janie shrieked, Tom laughed, and Louise gasped. For, in her hurry, she had forgotten that a step led from the scullery to the kitchen, had caught her foot in it, and had fallen headlong, spilling the stew all over the kitchen floor.

Poor Louise! she cried with vexation, and Janie cried in sympathy, while practical Tom went down on his hands and knees, and began gathering up the scattered meat and putting it back into the enamelled dish.

'Come along, Clumsy!' he said; 'we must have dinner, somehow.'

So, after Louise had wiped her splashed dress as best she could, they all sat down to stew without gravy, and eked out the meal with bread and butter. But Louise sulked a little because Tom had called her 'clumsy.'

After dinner Tom went out again, and Louise and Janie washed up. Janie was rather pale, for she had a headache, brought on by fright and the heat. But Louise did not notice, and made her trot busily backwards and forwards between the kitchen and the scullery.

At last all the things were washed up and put away, and then Louise had a sudden idea.

'I *should* like to make Mother some soup as a surprise for to-night,' she said impulsively. 'I do so want her to see what a good cook I am, and how well I can keep house!'

So she put a saucepan on the gas-ring, and threw in some vegetables and salt and pepper.

'I must put in some rice,' she thought, but when she looked in the larder, no rice was to be found.

'Janie,' said Louise, 'just take a cup, and run down to Mrs. Johnson's, and borrow half a cupful of rice.'

'Oh, Louise!' said the little one, half sobbing with fatigue, 'my head does ache so.'

'Very well, then, you stay here and see that my soup does not boil over, while I run to Mrs. Johnson's. I shan't be a moment, and I am sure Mother wouldn't mind.'

Louise seized a cup and hurried away, with a parting direction to Janie to look after the soup.

Mrs. Johnson was quite willing to lend the rice, but she kept Louise talking for ever so long, asking her questions about her school and her mother. Mrs. Johnson was rather a lazy woman, and full of curiosity about her neighbours.

When Louise finally left the house, twenty minutes had elapsed since her departure from home. She hurried down the road, and as she came within sight of her house she was greatly surprised to see several women standing round the door. She rushed up.

'Oh, what is it?' she cried, and tried to force her way in.

The people made way when they saw who she was, and she ran into the house.

Several of the neighbours were in the kitchen, grouped round something—or some one—lying on the ground. Louise pushed her way to the front and looked.

On the kitchen floor, lying on a pile of shawls, the sleeve of her dress cut away from her arm, the arm itself wrapped in cotton-wool, lay Janie—Janie, pale and still.

'Oh, is she dead?' shrieked Louise in horror, and a motherly woman answered her—

'No, no, my dear; she's only a bit faint. She will come to in a minute.'

'What *has* happened?' gasped Louise, and just then Janie opened her eyes and gave a little moan. When she saw Louise bending over her she tried to smile.

'It—boiled—over,' she said feebly, 'and I—couldn't—help spilling—it. It was—so—heavy, and—it fell—all over—my—arm.'

Poor little Janie! Left all alone in the kitchen, she had noticed that the soup was boiling over, and had tried to lift the saucepan off the gas-ring. The saucepan had been too heavy for her, and had turned over, spilling the hot soup all down her right arm, and scalding it badly.

When the neighbours at length left the house, Janie was safely in bed, moaning for her mother. Louise sat by the bedside, holding the little hot hand, and crying tears of bitter remorse. Tom, scared and silent, sat in the kitchen below.

Oh, what a relief it was to Louise, when at length Mrs. Miller came home! What a relief to confess all, and to be forgiven!

'Oh, Mother, Mother!' she sobbed, clinging to her mother late that night, when Janie had at length fallen asleep; 'oh, Mother, it was all my fault. But I never meant any harm; I didn't think, Mother. I will never be so thoughtless again; I will always stop to think twice, before I do anything.'

Louise kept her word. She did not cure herself of her impulsive ways all at once, but the sight of her little sister's suffering proved a sharp lesson to her, and she tried hard to grow steady and reliable.

And she has improved so much that I think her mother could safely trust her to look after the house now, if she again wanted to spend a day in the country.

"Spilling the stew all over the kitchen floor."

"Two cats, like two sentinels, keeping guard."

THE TWO SENTINELS.

A True Anecdote.

A COBBLER sat at his bench. He was putting iron plates on the toes of some old boots to make them last a bit longer. By the fireside there was a basket, partly covered with a cloth, and just by the basket, a kitchen chair. And what do you think was on the chair? Two cats—two cats sat side by side, just like two sentinels, keeping guard. So closely did they watch the basket that they neither moved nor turned their eyes.

A visitor called. 'What are the cats doing?' he asked.

'Oh, they're watching the chickens. The chickens are just hatched.'

The basket was full of chickens!

'Really! and won't they kill them?'

'No; they won't hurt them. They killed a sparrow among the chickens in the yard this morning, and wouldn't let any one take the sparrow away from them; but they take care of the chickens.'

'That's very strange. Did you train them?'

The cobbler told the visitor that, when the cats were kittens, they learnt they must not hurt the chickens, and now they were as good as fathers to them.

'Well, to be sure,' said the visitor; 'that's as pretty a sight as ever I saw.'

BE KIND.

SPEAK kindly, for the gentle word
Is like a lovely lay,
That cometh from a singing-bird,
And sweetens all the day.

Think kindly, for the gentle thought
Inspires to gentle deeds,
And acts of noble worth are wrought
Of which kind thoughts were seeds.

Act kindly, for the hands are fair
That lift another up;
A cup of water you can bear
E'en in a little cup.

Live kindly, for so, day by day,
You garner up a store
Of good that shall not pass away,
But live for evermore.

GOOD OLD PLUMS.

I KNOW a good-natured farmer who declares he cannot be hard upon boys who visit his apple-trees, seeking either the ripe or unripe fruit, because apples are so great a temptation to them. But another farmer tells me that they like plums as much as, if not more than, apples.

The ancient British boy had little chance of getting nice plums. There was in his day a wild bullace growing in some places, but that fruit is not particularly agreeable uncooked. Here and there is found, seemingly wild, a tree that bears dark plums with a bloom on them, and another having yellow fruit; but both these are supposed to be descended from plum-trees brought over by the Romans many centuries ago. Nowadays we have a host of varieties of this fruit, some of them seedlings, others from abroad. Several of them have a long history, and they are as good as they are famous.

People have tried hard to find out which of all our plums was the first to have a special name. One that certainly does date back to the Middle Ages is the Blue Pendragon, which came to England from Italy. Another old plum is the Blue Gage, a small, round fruit with sharp juice, but not much taste. Then there was one called the Violet Plum, said to have been brought over to us in Stuart times. A plum known as the Morocco Plum was an old favourite, because its fruit usually ripened early. The Magnum Bonum is an old plum of our orchards, grown by Tradescant, three hundred years ago. A plum much used for preserving was the Harvest Plum, so called because it ripened just when the corn was cut; this plum was a bright red, and rather sugary.

One of the old kinds still keeps its fame, and many people think it is the plum of plums—this is the Greengage; it is said to have reached England in the reign of George I., having been sent from the gardens of the Chartreuse, near Paris. Reine Claude was the name given to this plum, but the ticket somehow got rubbed off during the passage. The gardener of a Mr. Gage, who had received it, when he saw the fruit called it the Greengage, and this name it has kept till now. There is a Purple Gage too, which has been highly esteemed, for it does not crack in wet summers, and, if kept dry when picked, these plums may be eaten a good while after they have left the tree. We have another valuable French plum in the Orleans, which arrived in England early in the eighteenth century.

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 163.)

CHAPTER XIX.

A MOMENT later the bolt of the gate was slipped, and the door opened, and Peter appeared.

'Come through quickly,' he said, 'and get into the boat.'

'Where is Gregory?' asked Paul, scared, in spite of his stout spirit.

'You heard a splash?' said the Eagle. 'I should think poor Gregory is in a worse place than the inside of a prison, and that is in the river.'

'It is no time to talk,' said Peter hurriedly. 'Get into the boat quickly; who knows what may be happening within there? Gregory fell into the river, and I hurt him before he fell; but he may easily get out again and give the alarm. He sprang at me to seize my money. I expected it, and was ready for him. If he had not fallen into the river it would have been I, and in that case this gate would never have been opened.'

By this time all three men were in the boat, which floated quickly down-current.

'You did rightly, Peter,' said Count Paul; 'but it may have a terrible end for Gregory. Thank Heaven, at least, that you were attacked first.'

Peter laughed.

'For what other purpose did I land to pay him? I showed my money because I felt sure that I was to be attacked, and I would rather fight front-face than be sprung upon from behind. I did not trust Gregory from the first. I was right. Well, he is outwitted, and we are safe. We cannot stop to help a traitor.'

Down the swift current the boat fled. The river here was comparatively shallow, the stream being more in the nature of a rapid, so tumultuous was the current, which no frost could arrest.

For half a mile the little vessel bobbed gaily upon its way, and there was no need of the oars with which she was provided. But presently Peter, at the helm, bade the two lads take an oar each.

'You will have to back water in a minute,' he said, 'for the ice begins opposite that wood. Stop her, broadside on, when I give the word.'

A minute later the call came to 'back water all,' then to stop her, and the boat floated sideways against the barrier of ice. The Eagle sprang out, and held her while the others disembarked and unloaded the craft, when it was seen that old Peter had taken care to provide himself with all manner of necessaries; of these the principal were some revolvers, with a goodly supply of cartridges, and three bags—one to be carried by each fugitive—containing tinned soups and similar food-stuffs.

'Well done, Peter,' said Paul, in admiration; 'you seem to have remembered everything!'

'We shall have every chance,' replied the old man; 'but do not be surprised if you find that the Countess was right, after all, and that you would have done better to be patient for three years. Though we are out of prison, we are not out of danger.'

'Cheer up, old man,' laughed the Eagle; 'it will take more than a few Mitkas and Petkas to catch Paul and me, now we are once more free and armed. So far you have done all the work, and done it right well; now it is our turn. If it comes to fighting, Paul and I will not be laggards.'

Peter grunted. He was not, as yet, very fond of the Eagle, whom he considered an intruder, and of whom he was probably somewhat jealous.

'We shall need to be something more than fighters to get safely out of our difficulties,' muttered the old man, 'with half Siberia arrayed against us.'

'Don't be cross, Peter,' laughed the young Count. 'What about the boat—leave it here?'

'Leave it, certainly, and take to the forest. There is a village ten miles away from here, where I have a friend—or rather an introduction from a friend. He will give us another letter to a village farther westward, and so on. Without such an arrangement we should not get far, for there is a reward for every convict recaptured.'

'Peter, you are a genius!' exclaimed his young master. 'No man could have arranged more cleverly than you have. Where did you learn your cleverness?'

'Necessity taught me, and the love of my dear mistress, and perhaps a little of the same which I bear for the son of my mistress,' said Peter; 'but, above all things, it is money which renders nearly everything possible in Russia. He who can command money here is both wise and cunning and powerful, and all else that he desires to be—for all these things may be bought.'

By this time the little party of three, each equipped with the bag-knapsack which contained all likely to be required for present needs, was in full retreat through the forest. They had struck a beaten track, and went quickly forward through the darkness. It was five in the morning when, passing down a high road into which their side track had led at the limit of the pine forest through which they had walked for an hour or more, they found themselves in the midst of a village.

'This must be Koblofka, my first stop,' said Peter, consulting a list of names which he produced from his pocket, and reading therefrom by the light of a match, 'Koblofka, ten miles; third house on the left entering the village from the east. Ask for Nicholas Petrof.'

'Then we must retrace our steps,' said Paul, 'and make sure of the house; a mistake might ruin us.'

This was obviously true, and the three fugitives went back half a mile, in order to make quite certain that the village began where it seemed to begin. They found the signpost, upon which were set forth the name of the place and number of 'souls,' or male inhabitants; females are not included, in Russia, among those entitled to the title 'soul.' From this signboard they counted the houses, and, having determined that the third house was undoubtedly the third one on the left side, they crept softly to the door and knocked. Snores from within bore witness to the presence of a sleeper. Paul, who took the lead in all such matters, as though by right, knocked again, more loudly. The snoring ceased, some one grunted, coughed, complained in sleepy accents, and came to the door.

'Who is it?' he asked.

'Savinof's friends,' said Peter, naming his introducer.

The peasant opened his door at once.

'Come in, and Heaven be your helper!' he said. 'How many—three? So be it. Fear nothing; while it is dark, and no one yet about, you are safe. I am alone in the house. Do you hunger?'

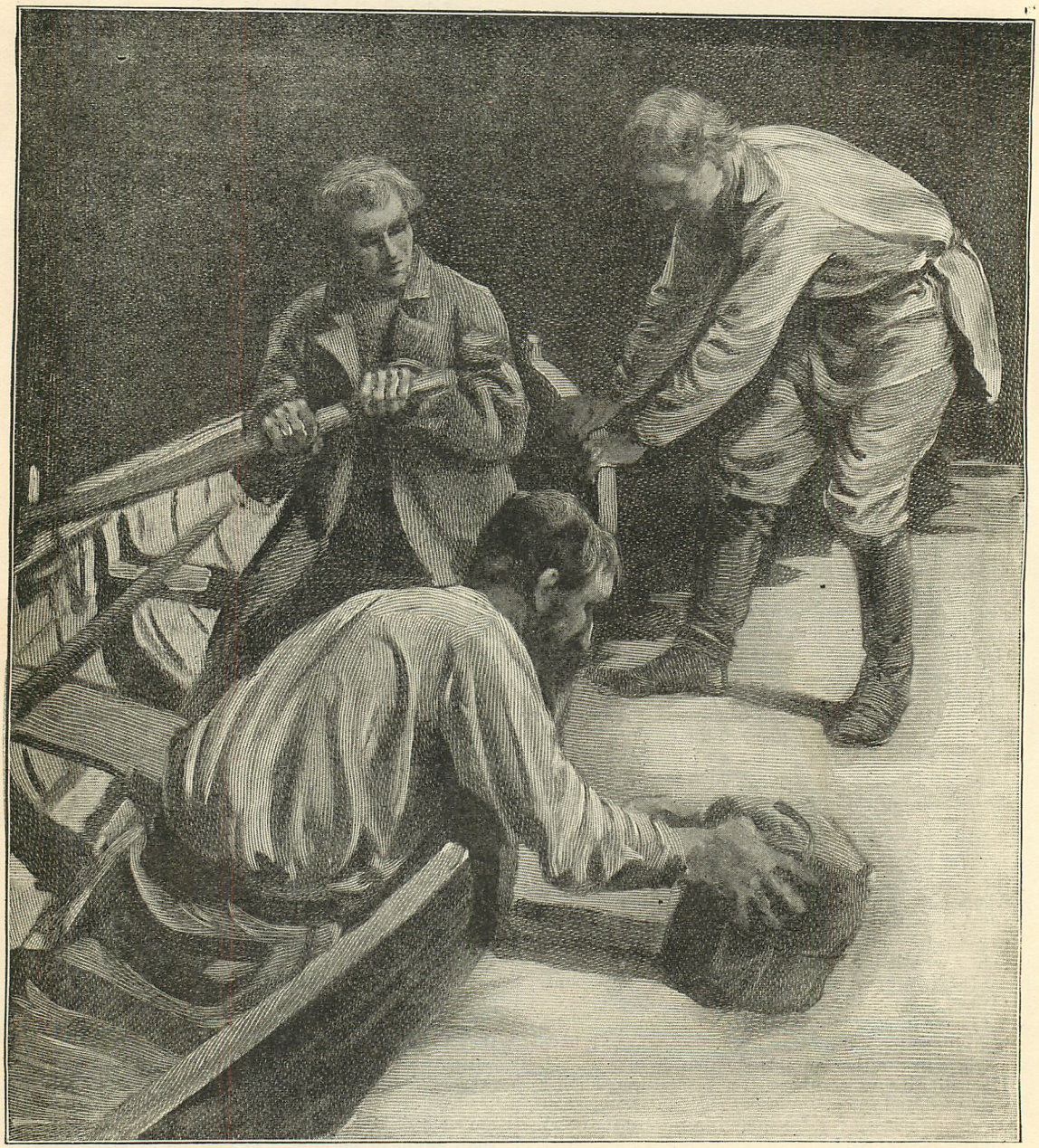
'Give us what you have,' said Peter. 'We have money. You shall see a coin which is rare in this village.'

'Is it so?' said Nicholas Petrof, bustling about, and producing scraps of bread, milk, and the remains of some buckwheat porridge. 'So long as one feels that one is ready to help the unfortunate even without payment, it is no sin to take money where there is plenty.'

'That is a good view, my friend,' said Paul. 'I am able to pay well. In accepting payment you shall rob us of nothing. You are one, I understand, who is ready to help the unfortunate—if necessary—without reward. Why?'

'First, for the love of Christ,' said Nicholas. 'Secondly, for the love of my fellow-men, and the hatred of those who treat them ill. Lastly, because I too have suffered, and God has brought me out of tribulation. I was a prisoner, and am free. I was penniless and hungry; and I own three cows, and pay tax upon five acres of land.'

'Good! Such as you deserve the favours of



"The Eagle held the boat while the others unloaded."

Heaven,' said Paul, greatly touched. 'What if, one day, it were discovered that you had assisted the unfortunate?'

Old Nicholas shrugged his shoulders. 'Nitchevo!'* he said.

* The Russian peasant's commonest expression, meaning 'It does not matter,' and showing resignation.

Then the fugitives sat down and made a meal, and presently Nicholas escorted them up a ladder into his *cherdak*, or garret, where he arranged for them heaps of straw and rags—primitive beds, indeed, but the most luxurious of couches to men worn out with the excitement of the escape from prison, and the fatigue of a ten miles' walk over snowy roads.

(*Continued on page* 183.)

"'Please, sir, I'm the new stable-boy.'"

NOBODY'S DOG.

(*Continued from page* 164.)

JUST then, a servant came up to carry away the tea-things.

'Tell Stephens to bring a light collar and lead,' said Lady Crofton.

A man came and fastened a thin leather strap round my neck. This was the very first time I had worn a collar, though I had heard of such things. I did not like it, for I was no longer master of my own legs, and I felt myself in the power of the person who held me; but I tried not to struggle in the lady's gentle hands, as she led me herself across the lawn, through the house, and into the kitchen, where she saw that I had a good meal.

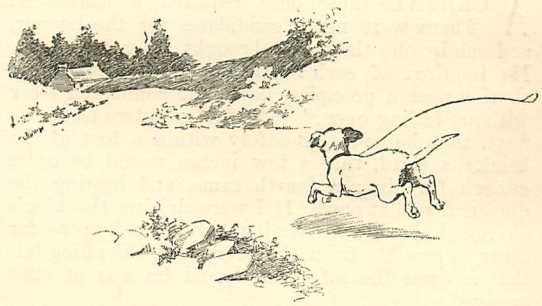
Lady Crofton, I found, had fine drawing-room dogs of her own—dogs who moved in grand society, and with whom I was unfit to mingle even in play.

Sir William had *his* dogs—strong, swift, and large, fit to follow him, either when walking or riding. These lived mostly in the stable-yard, but would not have received me either, so I was taken by Stephens to a large yard at the back, skirting the kitchen and servants' rooms.

As we crossed this yard, a huge cream-coloured mastiff roused himself, and, as he did so, a chain rattled. He was not able to spring at me, because its iron links held him fast. But he snarled savagely.

'Down, Blarney!' said Stephens; and with a low growl, which turned into a miserable cry, the big mastiff, after giving a lick to an empty water-dish, turned into his kennel, and flung himself down with a groan.

'That dog gets worse and worse. I'm half afraid to carry him his food,' called a woman from the kitchen door, as the man passed her, leading me.



"I darted off, collar, lead, and all."

'The Vet. has just been to see him and has asked to speak to Sir William,' added another servant, bustling up. 'I guess you'll catch it, Stephens.'

Here the yard door opened and Sir William came in, red with anger, and with him the man in gaiters.

'Stephens, come here,' said Sir William. 'Now,' he added, 'will you tell my man what you have just told me?'

'Oh, I mentioned to Sir William that this dog is suffering from starvation, as well as from want of exercise.'

'Can't be, sir,' said Stephens; 'when I don't feed him myself, cook does.'

'He gets a good supper every night,' said the cook, coming forward. 'I mix it myself; if he don't eat it, I'm not to blame.'

Hot, angry words followed, then a little clear chirping voice from behind said, 'Please, sir, I see the cook put Blarney's supper down, and please, sir, cook's afraid of him, and she pokes the dish to him with a long stick, and often he can't reach it. And please, sir, it's the same with his water.'

'Who's that?' said Sir William.

'Please, sir, I'm the new stable-boy,' piped a little urchin, coming to the front; 'and please, sir, I wants to leave, because I'm afraid to stay now I've split on the cook. And please, sir, Stephens never takes Blarney out as you ordered, and it's being chained up all day that makes him cross.'

'Bravo!' said Sir William, laying his hand on the lad's shoulder. 'We've got at the truth, anyhow. Always speak up, my lad, for those that can't speak for themselves. As to leaving, I will increase your wages, and leave the dog in your charge. Nobody will meddle with you,' he added, glancing at the servants. 'So you are not afraid of Blarney?'

'No, sir,' grinned the little shrimp of a boy, fairly crawling into the kennel on his hands and knees. 'Please, sir, I slept in here one cold night along with him.'

I heard no more. The thought of Luke came back to me, so I darted off, collar, lead, and all, while they were all busy about Blarney. Making a dash for the open road I was soon flying along, I hardly knew where.

(*Continued on page* 179.)

THE BEST CHARIOTEER.

A CERTAIN king once required a charioteer. There were many candidates for the honour, and one by one they were brought before the king. He inquired of each: 'If you were driving my chariot near a precipice, how near could you steer without falling over?' The first said two feet; the next, that he could go safely within a foot of the brink; a third, that a few inches would be quite enough for him; a fourth came, and hearing the question, said at once, 'If I were driving the king's chariot, I should consider it my duty to keep as far away as possible from the precipice.' The king felt that he was the safest man, and he was at once engaged.

THEY WANTED IT MOST.

A BRIDGE in Italy had been partly swept away by a flood, and only the arch in the centre of the bridge was left standing. Every minute the strong waters threatened to carry that part away too. A house had been built on the arch. The inhabitants of the house were shrieking for help. The people on the river-bank were afraid to trust themselves in the water, as they thought that the strong current would carry them away. At last a man who had been standing by offered a hundred pounds to any one who would rescue the poor people from their dangerous position. A young peasant stepped forward and offered to save them, and by tremendous efforts managed to get them all to the bank. The man offered him the money, but the peasant told him he did not require it, but asked him to give it to the people he had just rescued, saying that they were in greater need than he was. The people around applauded the peasant's kind act.

HEROINES OF THE CIVIL WAR.

V.—TO SAVE THE KING'S DAUGHTER.

'BUT you will be found out ere you have gone the first ten miles. You are too refined for men to take you for a simple serving-woman. Besides, there is the danger that the child may spoil all; she is neither young enough to be silent, nor old enough to understand.'

It was Sir John Berkeley who spoke, and the lady who listened to him, with a little smile on her lips, was Lady Dalkeith, governess to the little Princess Henrietta, youngest daughter of Charles I., who had been left behind, an infant a fortnight old, in Exeter Castle, when her mother, Queen Henrietta Maria, had escaped to France.

The baby girl had not suffered through her mother's absence, however, for Lady Dalkeith had cared for her as though she had been her own child, and Sir John Berkeley, who had been in command of the besieged castle, had only surrendered—when surrender became a necessity—on condition that his royal charge should receive all due honour, and that he and Lady Dalkeith should continue to have her under their care. The stipulation had been granted, and for a year the little Princess had lived at an old country house called Oatlands, under the charge of her faithful guardians.

But now a change was threatened. A command had been sent from the Parliamentary party, who by this time had taken the power into their own hands, that the little Princess should be brought to London (to St. James's Palace), and given into the keeping of the Duke and Duchess of Northumberland, who were utter strangers to her.

'Tis a cruel command,' said Sir John, as he read the letter, 'to take a child scarce two years old from the only friends she has ever known, and place her among strangers, who are disloyal to her parents and can scarce be expected to love her. But I see no way to avoid it.'

'Tis a cruel and a wicked command,' repeated Lady Dalkeith, clenching her hand as she spoke, 'and I, for one, will not obey it. If they want her, let them come and fetch her, and it will not be my fault if she be here when they arrive.'

'And where will she be?' asked Sir John. 'Up a tree, or hidden in the heart of a haystack?—for, by my troth, I know of no other place where you could

hide her. The park is too closely guarded for it to be possible to smuggle her out.'

'By God's help she will be where she ought to be—in France, with her mother, the Queen,' answered Lady Dalkeith firmly; and then, much to Sir John's astonishment, she unfolded a plan which was so simple, and yet so daring, that it called forth the remonstrances with which this story began.

But the little Princess's brave governess would listen to no remonstrances. She had promised her royal mistress that she would never leave her little charge till she had given her back to her again, and she was determined to keep her promise; so at last, seeing that he could not turn her from her purpose, Sir John undertook to do all that he could to help and protect her.

On one point they were agreed: if anything was to be done, it must be done quickly, for well they knew that if an evasive answer, or no answer at all, were sent back to London, three days at most would suffice to bring a troop of Cromwell's soldiers to Oatlands, and then, if she were in the house, the baby Princess must be given up, or, if she were absent, her absence must be discovered.

So Sir John betook himself to his steward, and informed him that it was likely that he might have to go to London for a few days on matters of business, while Lady Dalkeith repaired to a large upper room, where her faithful old nurse sat sewing beside a low bed, on which a beautiful, dark-haired little girl lay sleeping.

Lady Dalkeith shut the door of the chamber carefully behind her and locked it, then she crossed the room and knelt down at the old woman's side.

'You would do anything for me, is it not so, Barbara?' she asked, stroking the wrinkled hands that had ministered to her ever since she had been a child herself.

'You know that, without asking, my lady,' answered Barbara; 'therefore methinks there is some special service that you would have me render to-day.'

'You think truly, Barbara,' said her mistress, springing to her feet, 'for if ever I needed your aid, I need it now. The King's enemies would fain take the Princess from us, and you and I are going to frustrate their design—you by dressing me as a beggar-woman, and I by tramping my way to Dover with my baby on my back.'

The look of doubt which at first appeared on old Barbara's face soon vanished; her mistress inspired her with some of her own brave spirit.

'God shield you, my lady,' she said, as she hobbled off to do her bidding, 'and grant you a safe journey, for you have the courage as well as the beauty of your race. Methinks,' she added, pausing for a moment at the bedside of the sleeping child, and touching one of her curls tenderly, 'if the lamb has to go, it would be safer to take her shorn. Then she might pass for a boy, and, if her absence be discovered ere you are safe out of the country, there will be less danger of your being traced.'

'A happy thought, Barbara. Your head was ever a wise one,' exclaimed Lady Dalkeith, opening a little cabinet and taking out a pair of scissors. 'I lay awake planning my journey all last night, and yet it never entered my thoughts to change the lass into a lad; yet the doing of it will add tenfold to our safety. We will change her name also. "Princess" she styles herself; "Pierre" will serve the purpose now. Ah! I see it all straight before me: I will be a poor Frenchwoman, begging my way home to my native Normandy, and this will be Pierre, my little son. And if any strangers would speak to us, our knowledge of English will be small.'

The long, white, dusty road wound through the rich county of Kent on its way to the sea at Dover. There were many travellers passing to and fro upon it on that hot July day in the year 1646. There were soldiers on foot and on horseback—some of them Cromwell's men; some of them Cavaliers. There were officers of State carrying dispatches, and delicately dressed ladies, seated in great, lumbering travelling coaches, on their way to London or to the coast; there were honest country folk driving their sheep and cattle to market, and there were poor wayfarers trudging on foot from one village to another.

Amidst all this coming and going, it was no wonder that a poorly-clad woman, slouching along with her face towards Dover, with a dirty, dark-skinned child on her back, was little noticed by the soldiers or the rich folk who passed by. Occasionally one of these would throw her a penny, moved to pity by her poverty and her air of fatigue, but they did not pause to listen to the thanks which she muttered in a hoarse whisper. A party of poor folk, travelling in the same direction, made one or two attempts to speak to her, inviting her in a friendly way to join their company, but she gave them no encouragement.

'She is a foreigner,' they said to one another, shrugging their shoulders, 'and a mighty uncivil one at that. If I were in her place I would give that whining child a good cuff, and set it down to walk awhile; it would teach it to use its legs and hold its silly tongue.'

Only one other person on all that long, white road noticed the woman and her child. This was a gentleman on horseback who wore a large, soft felt hat, pulled well down over his eyes, and who rode slowly along the road as if he feared his horse might fall lame. Had any one chanced to watch his movements, they would have seen that, although he was sometimes in front of the poor traveller and sometimes behind (for he would ofttimes halt at an inn for half an hour, so that, if she were behind, she would pass him by), he always kept her in sight—she always managed to be near him. When at last she reached Dover, and stepped on board the common packet-boat, he did the same, although he travelled in the better part of the boat, she amongst the poorest passengers. But, when they were once on the other side of the English Channel, they travelled together, only now the rags had disappeared; and when, in the Palace of the Louvre, in Paris, Lady Dalkeith and Sir John Berkeley restored the little Princess Henrietta to her overjoyed mother, no traces remained of their strange journey, save the little Princess's cropped locks and darkened skin.

To Save the King's Daughter!

"'When that lighthouse was built it stood out in the sea.'"

THE COASTGUARD'S YARN.

'LET'S ask the coastguardsman!' said Archie, who had been having a discussion with his brother; and he turned towards a burly coastguardsman, who, in oilskin cap and coat, and duly armed with swordstick and revolver, was just about to start on his nightly rounds.

'Please,' began Archie, 'could you tell me why that lighthouse is put just here, where there are no rocks for any vessel to be warned off? It seems such a queer place for a lighthouse.'

'Well, young gentleman,' said the genial coastguardsman, 'I should tell you this coast has altered very much from what it was when this lighthouse was built; it was then much further out at sea than now. But it's a very useful lighthouse still, though, as you say, there are no rocks here for ships to drift on.'

'Then, what other dangers can there be here?' asked Norry.

'When that lighthouse was built,' began the man, pointing with his strong hand towards the building, 'it stood out in the sea on a sandbank that was never uncovered, even at low tide, as it is now when the sea has receded so much.'

'A sandbank!' interrupted Archie in surprise. 'Sand would not wreck a ship! I wonder people should build a lighthouse merely for a sandbank.

'Ah, sir,' said the coastguard, with a good-tempered smile, 'that's landsman's talk, that is! Surely you have heard tell of the Goodwin Sands, which have wrecked more vessels than any rocks? This sandbank was something of the same sort.'

'Oh, yes! I forgot the Goodwin Sands,' said Archie, blushing a little at his ignorance. 'And have vessels been wrecked here, like on the Goodwins?'

'They have indeed,' said the man in a quiet tone of voice. 'I should not like to say offhand how many good ships used to be wrecked on those sands before that lighthouse was built.'

'How long has it been built?' asked Norry.

'Close on a hundred years,' answered the man. 'My grandfather helped to haul the timber for it. I can well remember the tale he used to tell us of the wreck of the big East Indiaman which led to the building of the lighthouse. She was on her way home with a lot of time-expired soldiers. The captain had, it was said, expected to pick up a pilot, but somehow none was at hand, and in a fog the vessel drifted on to the sandbank. There she stuck, with the great seas breaking over her, for it was a stormy night. Her gun went booming across the bay for help, but there was then no lifeboat on this coast, and though some fishing-boats put out, the weather was so rough that they were swamped almost immediately. Grandfather used to tell us of the old white-haired gentleman who stood on the beach all through that night, for he had a son an officer on board the East Indiaman, and his grief was terrible to see. "I can do nothing!—nothing!" he kept on saying, "and I would give my life to save my boy!"'

'Was he saved?' hurriedly asked Norry.

The coastguardsman shook his head. 'The body was washed ashore in the morning almost at his father's feet, and from that hour the poor gentleman never rested till he had built the lighthouse yonder to mark out those treacherous sands, "so that other sons might be spared to their fathers," he would sorrowfully say. The first night that the lantern in the lighthouse was lighted, he stood for a long time watching the bright light shining across the water; then he came home with a happier look on his face, folk said, than he had worn since the day of the wreck. That very night he was found dead in his bed with the same quiet smile on his face. His work was done! There,' said the coastguard in a different voice, 'what a yarn I have been spinning! but it's a true one, anyhow, and that's more than most yarns are. Good evening. I must be off on my rounds,' and the man strode off at a rapid pace, and was soon out of sight.

AN INGENIOUS ADVERTISEMENT.

DURING a recent Musical Festival, a firm of house-furnishers inserted in the local newspapers an advertisement appropriate to the occasion. Here it is:—

MEMS. FOR MUSICIANS
ATTENDING THE
—— MUSICAL FESTIVAL.

Our Rustless Kettles *Sing* a good song.
Our Pocket Knives and Razors are the ♯est made.
Our Floor Coverings will please, whether for Mansion, Villa, or ♭.
Our Paper-hangings will *Harmonise* beautifully.
Our Family *Scales* are *A Minor* but useful appliance.
Our Plate Powder is G——'s own *Composition.*
Our Garden Forks are almost *Tuning Forks.*
Our Mincing Machines are unequalled for *Chopin.*
Our Stable Brooms are of the finest *Bass,* and can be had with or without a *Handel.*
Our Floor Polish is a fine *Stainer.*
Our Blind, Picture, and Sash *Chords* are 𝄞 lines which housekeepers should *note.*
Our Feather Beds will *Rest* the weary body, and *Shake* up anew next morning.
Our Ladders, like *Exercises,* lead you safely step by step.
Our *Staff* have no *Crotchets;* their *Technique* is excellent, and all our *Performance* is in good *Time.*

A FAIR BARGAIN.

ONE day, when a great violinist was in Paris, he jumped into a cab and ordered the driver to take him quickly to the concert-hall, where an impatient audience was waiting to hear him perform a famous piece of music on one string of his violin.

'What's the fare?' he asked.

'For you, sir,' said the driver, 'ten francs.'

'You jest,' laughed the violinist.

'Not so; you charge as much for a single seat at your concert.'

The musician was silent for a minute, and then, with a shrewd glance at the over-reaching cabman, said, handing him a reasonable fare, 'I'll pay you ten francs when you drive me on one wheel.'

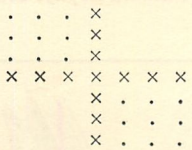
FAIRY FIRS.

A German Legend.

ON the hills of the Harz in Germany, amid which nestles many a pretty little village, there are a number of beautiful firs, sometimes called *holy* or *fairy* firs. In most years, the trees yield an abundance of pretty cones, which are wrought into ornaments by the villagers. There is a story, that one day the wife of a poor sick man went out, seeking these cones, to get a little money for her need by selling a few. She met a little man with a long white beard, who asked her questions, and told her where to go for the best cones. When she reached the place pointed out, such a shower of cones came down from the firs that she was quite frightened, and began to run away. But some had fallen into her basket, and more came down afterwards, till the basket became so heavy she could hardly carry it. She found the reason was that the cones were all silver. Next day she met the little man, who told her that he was a fairy king, and he also gave her some herbs, which made her husband well.

PUZZLERS FOR WISE HEADS.

6.—Double Word Square.



Replace the crosses and dots in the above figure by letters which form words meaning:—

1. A great quantity.
2. The difference in value between metallic and paper money.
3. The piece of timber on which a structure rests.
4. A man engaged in military service.
5. Not busy.
6. In the other case.
7. Rocks lying near the surface of the water.

The words read the same either downwards or across.

[*Answer on page* 211.] R. M. B.

Answer to Puzzle on Page 146.

5.—Rag-a-muffin.

THE LION'S MISTAKE.

A BRITISH officer was shooting in Somaliland. One night, as he lay on his bed, within his tent, a lion made a sudden spring over the rough fence which had been put up round the encampment.

The lion took no notice of the animals, but went straight to the sportsman's tent and seized the sleeper—fortunately by the hand only.

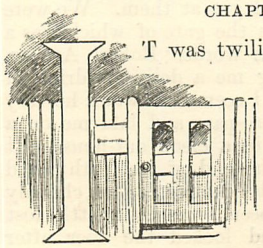
It must have been a terrible awakening for the officer. But somehow, as the lion changed its grip for the man's shoulder, it got hold of the pillow instead, and then decamped with its prize. Next morning the pillow was found in the jungle, at a distance of several hundred yards from the encampment.

What a disappointment it must have been to the hungry lion when he discovered his mistake!

NOBODY'S DOG.

(*Continued from page* 174.)

CHAPTER VI.



IT was twilight when I found myself running along a road quite strange to me; darkness would soon find me homeless and masterless in the wide world. I was so tired that I slackened my pace to a walk, the leather lead still hanging from my neck and trailing like a long tail in the dust. All was silent, and, look which way I would, there was no house at which to beg for shelter.

But while I stood where four roads met, trying to decide which of them I should take, a sharp 'puff-puff' fell on my ear. The sound drew nearer, and I could see nothing, till, as I was looking about in a bewildered way, it was close upon me. Something rushed up, stirring up the dust as it came, and in an instant I felt a dreadful shock and a blow, which rolled me over on my back. I tried to get up, but could only struggle and howl, while out of the whirlwind of dust and the spinning of wheels came an angry voice, 'Plague take the beast!' It was my first master, Rupert Eversley, riding on a horse whose breath was steam and whose body was steel. After a few more hard words he shot off again, leaving me crushed and bleeding where I lay. One look he cast behind, but not at me, only to find out whether any one else had watched the scene—another moment and he had vanished.

In the dark blue sky above me sparkled the first star. In my agony I gazed up at it, and the fancy took me that it was like some loving eye that watches over lonely, humble little sufferers like me, and never sleeps. Was it fancy? Something seemed to lull my pain; I felt half asleep, and the next thing I knew was that a human hand was softly undoing the collar from my neck. It was a hand I could trust—strong, like Luke the mason's, yet light as Lady Crofton's. A trap with a fine horse stood in the road; I had not heard it come up; the man who was bending over me seemed to have just got down from it.

'What's gone wrong, eh?' As he spoke, with a dog's wonderful memory, the face of the Vet. flashed across me who had spoken out so plainly in Sir William's yard about Blarney, the mastiff. He was on his way home, after tending some speechless invalid. He handled me in a wonderful way, speaking soothing words all the time. 'Let us see, my little boy; any bones broken?' he began, and felt

me all over, just as if he knew every bit about me. 'Spine all right, hind legs right, right fore-paw—ah! badly crushed. Let's have a look at your collar, my little chappie. Bow-wow-wow, whose dog art thou? One of the Crofton Court dogs, eh! Well, you must come home with me in the trap since that is the case. Not but what I would have done my best if you had been only Johnnie Tinker's dog. No matter who his master may be to *me;* a dog's a dog for a' that.'

He was so kind that I tried hard not to moan when he lifted me, but covered his face and hands with licks wherever I could get at them. We were not far from his house, on the gate of which was a large brass plate with the words, 'Robert Archer, F.R.C.V.S.' After giving me a delicious drink of water, which was all that I seemed to want, he very carefully bound up my fore-paw and laid me on a lovely bed of fresh straw in a clean out-house. It was one of a long row at the end of a smooth paved yard. After bidding me be comforted, as cheerily and kindly as if I had been some poor little lost child, he went away and locked the door after him.

I could not sleep; first I felt hot, next I was shivering; the pain of my foot kept me awake. I was thankful for many a cool draught of the nice water left within reach. From time to time I heard

Run Over!

the restless whine of a small dog coming from the shed to the right, also a very comfortable snoring on the left from a big dog enjoying his repose. At last I fell asleep too, and dreamed of guarding Luke's red handkerchief, and woke with a start to find kind Robert Archer bringing a lovely warm breakfast for me.

(*Continued on page* 189.)

"He laid me on a lovely bed of fresh straw."

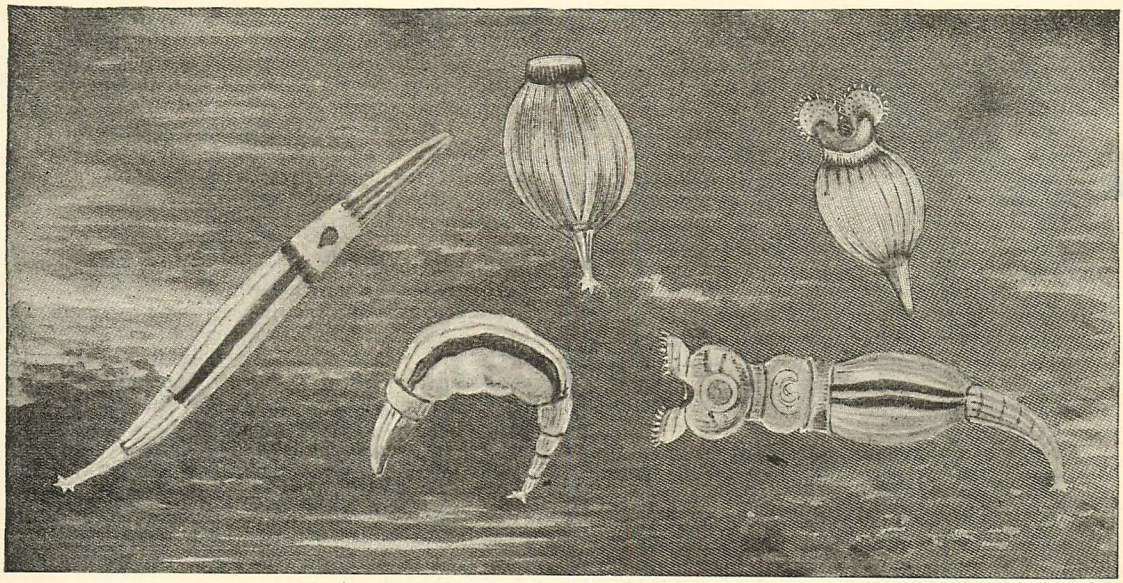


Fig. 1.—Various Water Animalcules.

SOME OF NATURE'S MARVELS.

V.—WHEEL ANIMALCULES.

IF a small bottle of water be taken from a clean pool and carefully examined with a magnifying lens, very minute creatures will generally be found swimming about—creatures no bigger than a tiny grain of sand. But in a drop of this water placed under the high power of a big microscope, one or more of these little bodies is sure to be found, and will now appear in a very different guise.

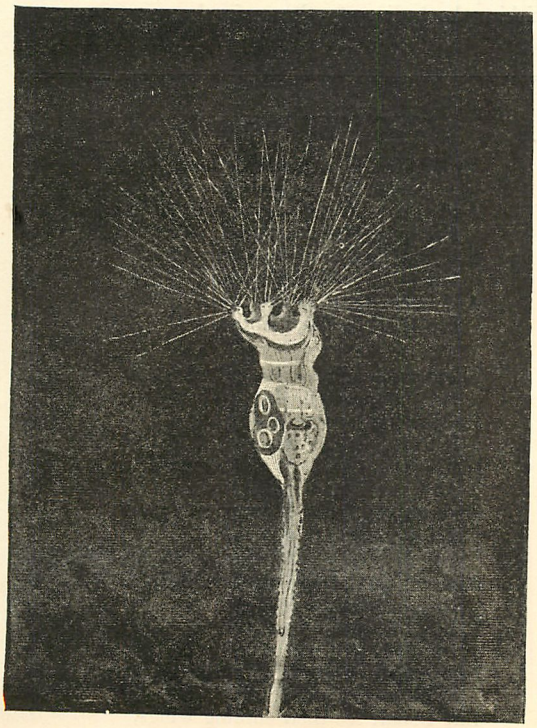


Fig. 3.—'Flower' Animalcule.

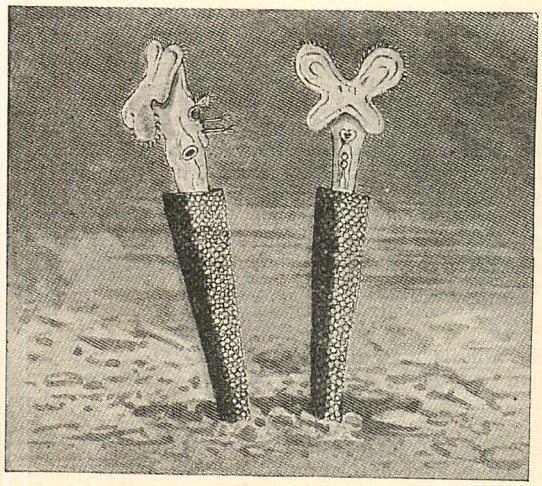


Fig. 2.—Animalcules in Sheath-armour.

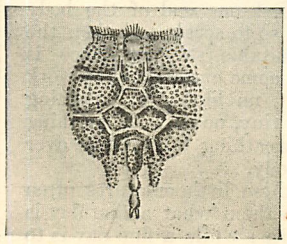


Fig. 4.—Melicerta Animalcule.

Let us suppose that the captive is one of the common wheel animalcules: that it has had time to settle down

before being examined. A peep down the tube of the microscope will probably reveal a long-bodied, glassy-looking little creature, rooted to the ground by a slender stalk, bending now this way and now that, and crowned by a pair of toothed wheels—like the wheel in a watch—in constant motion. These 'wheels' you may see in the right-hand bottom corner of fig. 1, crowning our captive, which has been drawn as it appears when bending down. From them the name 'wheel animalcule' is given, while the scientific term 'Rotifer' has the same meaning. As a matter of fact, hard though it seems to believe it, they are *not* wheels, and they do *not* go round and round! This appearance is due to the fact that the head-end of the body is divided into two lobes, or folds, around the edges of which are set a number of tiny threads which keep constantly moving from side to side, one after the other.

If you take a long piece of pencil between the finger and thumb, turn the point of the pencil straight upwards towards the ceiling, and move the hand and wrist quickly from side to side, you will see what each of these hairs is doing. If you could set a whole series of pencils arranged in a circle, moving in the same way as the pencil held in the hand, you would get the same effect of a moving wheel. By this movement, when the body is anchored to the ground, food particles are brought to the mouth; directly the body is released from its anchorage, these same 'wheels' serve to propel it through the water.

A little further down, near the middle of the body, a second series of movements will be seen. These are formed by the gizzard, and they can be well imitated by placing the two hands close together, the palms facing one another, and moving the fingers quickly up and down. The work of this little engine is to grind up the food and pass it on.

Quite suddenly, perhaps because some one has jarred the table on which the microscope stands, the wheels will disappear, and the body will be shut up like a telescope, almost before you can say 'Jack Robinson,' as in the figure in the middle of the picture, fig. 1. Then it may slowly lengthen out again, and go on as before, or it may loosen its hold on the ground and swim off, propelled by these same 'wheels'—or it may *walk* off! It walks in a way recalling the acrobat, for the body is bent double, the 'wheels' are withdrawn, and a conical snout is stuck out, which is used as another organ of locomotion. First one end of the body sucks hold of the ground, so to speak, and then the other, till a new and suitable stopping-place is arrived at, and the wheels come out and get to work again. There is no heart, no blood, no breathing organ; the body being so tiny, no special breathing apparatus is needed, for breathing takes place over the whole surface of the body.

In a rain-water gutter these little creatures often swarm. A wet day is to them what a fine day is to us—a day to take exercise; while a fine day is to them as a wet day for us—a day to stay indoors; for as soon as the gutter is empty and dry once more, this little creature shuts itself up, and quietly waits for rain again. Weeks may pass, however, and the broiling sun hold sway. Then the gutter becomes so dry that the first breeze carries the dust that has gathered there far and wide, and with this may go a few hundred of these animalcules. They are so minute that they can be carried a vast distance, but they may travel no further than the next roof; here they will remain till washed into the gutter once more by some welcome thunder-shower, when a few minutes later they will be at work as if nothing had happened.

Some of these little creatures take even more wonderful forms than that which we have just described, and in these the 'wheels' may be small, or absent altogether. In fig. 2, you will see a species which boasts a coat of mail, while in fig. 3 is shown the beautiful Floscularia, or Flower Animalcule. But most wonderful of all is the little Melicerta, fig. 4, which is fixed to one spot, and lives in a little house of its own building. This house is made up of the tiniest of tiny pellets, like little pills, and these are ranged round the body one by one. Each pellet is prepared in a little cup beneath the wheels. When the pellet is ready, this tiny architect bends down, and adds the new brick to the rim of the tube in which he lives.

Many hundreds of different kinds of these 'Rotifers' are known; some live in fresh water, some in salt, and some in next to no water at all, being found quite plentifully in damp earth, or in the little drops of water that collect in the leaves of mosses. Yet others, sad to relate, have grown lazy and become parasitic, living either on the outside, or within, the bodies of other animals.

W. P. Pycraft, F.Z.S., A.L.S.

MY HOME NEST.

I MADE myself a little nest
And set it in my home,
And there I watched and waited long,
For little birds to come.
The first that came was Happiness,
It had two shining wings,
And in my little nest at home
It sits all day and sings.

There came another little bird
Into my nest one day,
Its tiny little name is Joy,
It has a song so gay;
It flies about from room to room,
And never leaves off singing,
And, oh, the house is sweet and glad
All day when it is winging.

And yet there came another bird,
Its gentle name is Peace,
It has a sweet and quiet note,
I hope it will not cease.
I hope these birds from my small nest
Will never fly away,
But I shall see their shining wings,
And hear their song each day.

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 172.)

CHAPTER XX.

OLD Nicholas Petrof had cause to feel grateful to the friend who had sent this batch of fugitives to his care. Once or twice in his life, before this day, he had assisted in helping forward those who passed through his village in the hope of escaping, eventually, into Russia; but on every previous occasion his good offices had remained without substantial reward, excepting for the gratitude of those whom he had befriended. Paul presented him with the value of two pounds, an unheard-of sum of money to him. Nicholas had had a bad harvest last year, and one of his cows had died; this money, he declared, would atone for all the misfortune of the past season. 'I shall pray for your escape,' he said. 'God be with you, and soften the hearts of all to whom you apply for help!'

'That is a good prayer,' said Paul, 'and I say Amen to it. If all the men we meet prove as good fellows as you, my friend, I shall be well content.'

The Eagle stayed behind a moment. He produced a silver coin worth fourpence, which he pressed into the hand of Nicholas.

'I am not rich, my friend,' he said; 'it is all I have——'

'Then God forbid I should accept it,' replied Nicholas. 'Take it back—you may want it one day, though your brother is rich.'

'My brother!' laughed the Eagle. 'He is not my brother! I wish he was, then I too should be rich!'

Nicholas would not be induced to accept the twenty kopecks, however, and the Eagle was obliged to carry the coin away again in his pocket.

The whole of the day, or nearly so, the three had slept, and they left the house of old Nicholas as soon as darkness fell. All night they walked swiftly westwards, and it was six in the morning when they reached the next station—Ostrof—twenty miles from Koblofka—and applied to the peasant of that place who stood in relation to escaping convicts in a similar position to that of Nicholas at the latter village.

Here they were received with equal kindness, and concealed, this time, in the cow-house. During the day their host came excitedly into the shed; it was about noon and he awoke them from sleep.

'There is danger,' he said. 'Six mounted soldiers have ridden into the village in search of escaped convicts, probably yourselves; they are searching the houses. Thanks be to Heaven that I have special arrangements for such a case. See!'

The peasant cleared the straw from a portion of the floor of the cow-house, revealing a trap-door, which he opened.

'Get in, all, quickly,' he said. 'I will close the door upon you and arrange the straw over the whole floor as it was before; let them seek you, they shall not find you!'

Hidden in their cold, dark refuge, the fugitives, half an hour later, heard the voices of men and the tramp of feet overhead.

'What if they find us?' whispered Peter.

'What are our revolvers for?' murmured the Eagle, trembling with excitement.

Paul caught hold of the handle of the trap-door and hung on to it.

'This is a cow-house, as you may see,' they heard the peasant say; 'you may also see that there is no one present.'

'You are generous to your cows in the matter of straw,' said a second voice; 'see how thickly it is strewn. Take that pitchfork, Gavril, and prod about here and there.'

The hidden fugitives now heard the thud of Gavril's pitchfork, as it prodded every clump of straw which appeared to him to be suspiciously bulky. Apparently the examination proved satisfactory, for the voices died away in the distance and there was silence.

'Pleasant for us if we had been concealed in the straw!' whispered Paul.

'Pleasant for Gavril, too, when I jumped up and got him by the throat,' laughed the Eagle, 'which I should certainly have done!'

For two hours their peasant host did not come near the fugitives. Doubtless he was with the mob of villagers which followed the soldiers through every hut and cow-shed in the place; for the Cossacks, anxious to win the reward offered for the recapture of escaped convicts, certainly made a very exhaustive examination of the village. Once, however, during those two hours, the concealed men suffered for a few minutes a terrible shock of terror.

As they lay waiting for their host to return and report the danger past, they suddenly heard stealthy footsteps approach. Some one crept into the cow-shed, scraped away the straw, and opened the lid of the little cellar in which they crouched. The trio concealed within shrank into themselves, holding their breath, for they knew it was not the peasant, but probably some one who knew of the hiding-place and to whom it had occurred to see whether those 'wanted' were not perhaps concealed here. The new arrival, a boy, had caught up the pitchfork used shortly before by Gavril, and with this he prodded hither and thither, hoping to strike something solid. One of the prongs just reached and scratched the neck of the Eagle, but he made no sign, and presently the boy closed the trap-door and retired.

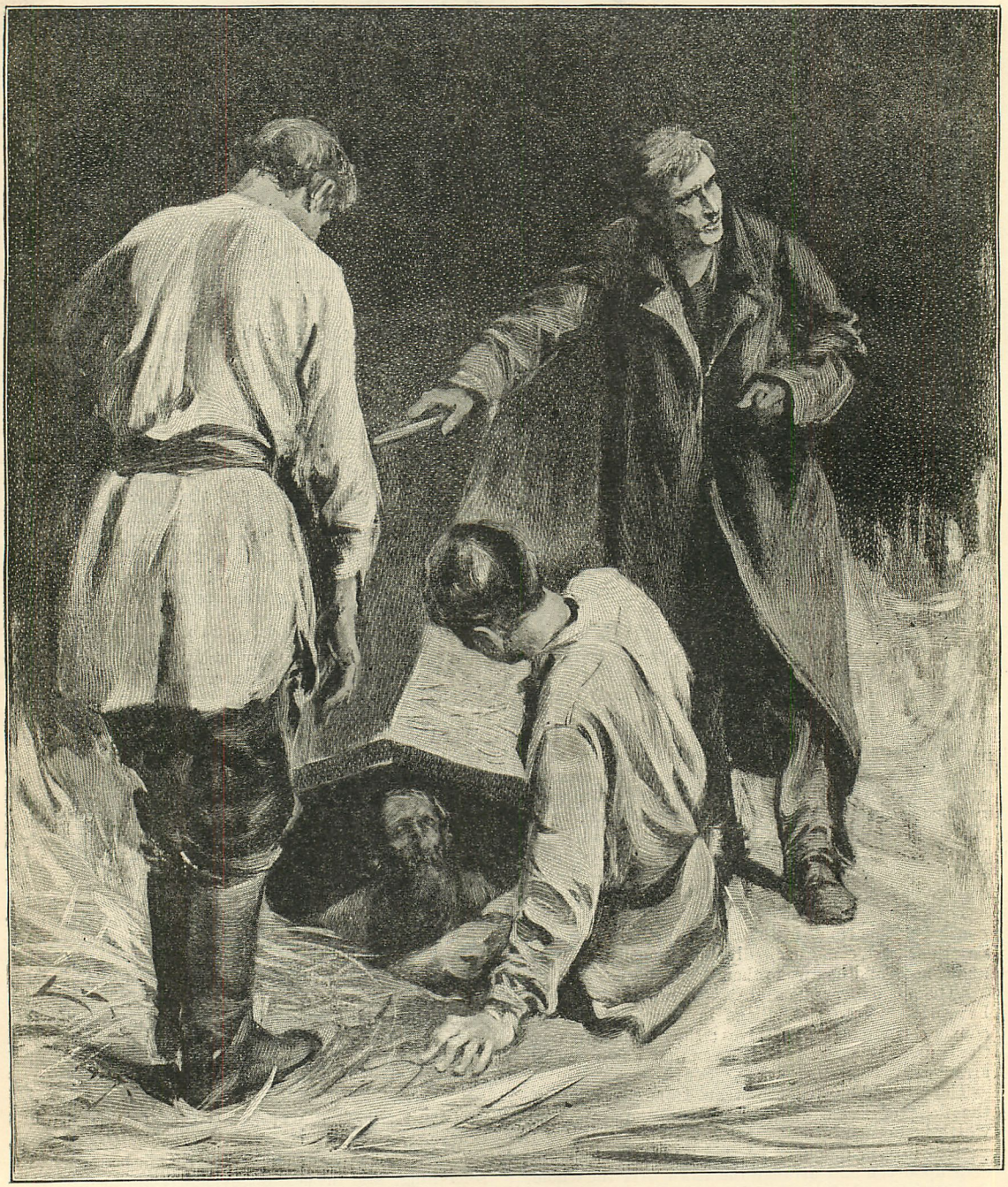
'The little rascal!' exclaimed the peasant, upon hearing the tale when he returned, relieved to report that danger was over. 'I can guess who it is. You are sure he did not see you?'

The trio were agreed that they had not been discovered.

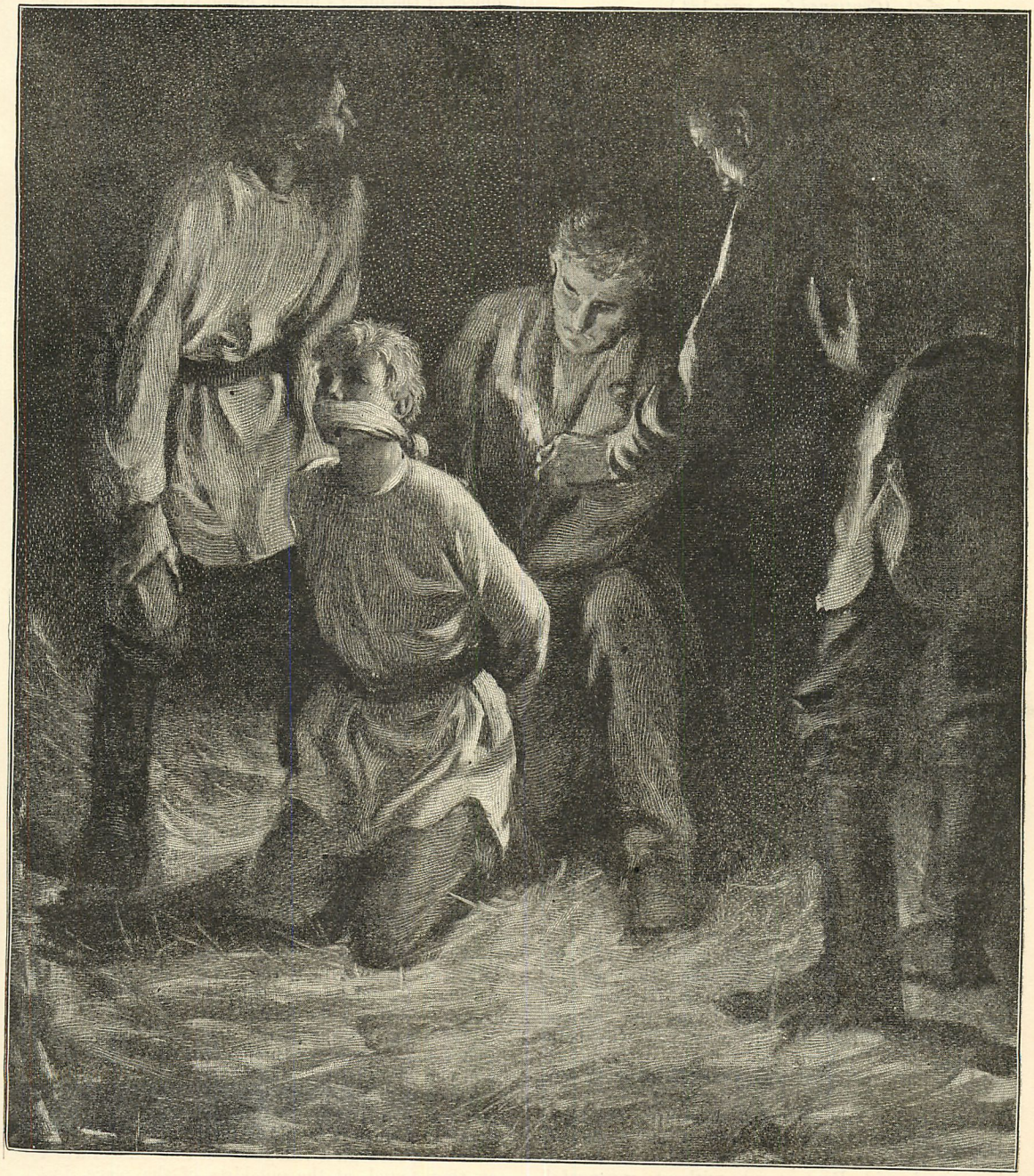
'A prong of the pitchfork scratched my neck,' said the Eagle, 'but you may be sure I did not tell him so.'

'Nevertheless, he must have felt that he had touched something,' said the peasant, evidently alarmed. 'In an hour or so it will begin to grow dark; the sooner you can depart the safer you will be. Remain where you are for the present; I will call you when it begins to grow dark.'

(*Continued on page* 186.)



"'Get in all, quickly!'"



"Paul gagged the lad and tied his arms behind his back."

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 183.)

CHAPTER XXI.

THE adventure in the cow-house cellar was not quite finished. Half an hour later the same youth returned. He was a lad of fifteen. He came this time with a candle-end, and looked in.

'Ah,' he said, 'I thought I felt one of you! I did not tell the soldiers, and they have ridden away. I could catch them, however, at the next village.'

'You are a clever boy,' said Paul, 'and deserve a present. Come inside, and we will talk it over. Don't be afraid.'

'I am not afraid,' said the boy. 'But why should I come down? Are you the escaped convicts? Give me a rouble for *prianniki* (biscuits), and I will tell no one.'

'Wait till we come out,' said Paul.

'Hand it up at once,' said the boy. Paul produced a rouble and handed it up. But as the boy stretched out his hand for the money, Paul caught his wrist and pulled him in. The Eagle's hand was over his mouth at once, and Peter closed the trap-door.

'Light a match,' said Paul, 'and let us see what we are about.'

By the flickering light of the match Paul gagged the lad and tied his arms behind his back, which done he lectured him upon the evil of extorting money from the unfortunate by means of threats.

'You shall have your rouble,' he ended, 'but the peasant will probably birch you well for your pains, and you will richly deserve it. Probably he will take you to the soldiers, and inform them that, though you were aware of the presence of the fugitives, you did not reveal it. They will believe him rather than you, remember, and if he is wise he will accuse you of concealing us, in which case you will spend the rest of your life in prison, where they may beat you every day. Then you will understand that you have behaved to-day like a fool.'

The boy seemed thoroughly frightened. A few minutes later the fugitives climbed out of their hole, anxious to disappear before the peasant should come for them. They did not want the boy to know that the man was in league with them.

'Discover him there as though accidentally,' Paul presently said to the peasant, when they sought him out secretly before departing; 'frighten him by threatening to bring him before the soldiers as our accomplice; in this way you will both prevent him from informing, and also drive out of him any suspicion that you yourself knew of our presence.'

Then, having well rewarded their host, the fugitives departed, leaving him to deal as he pleased with his prisoner. 'If you punish him, do so with discretion,' said Paul, 'and without revengeful feelings.'

After this our fugitives travelled westward for two days without particular incident; but on the third day adventures began to fall thickly about them, too many for their comfort.

The party had travelled, as usual, by night, and reaching the village, which was the pre-arranged object of the night's march, crept softly under cover of darkness to the hut described in their list as the seventh house on the left of the road, going west. Here they cautiously knocked at the door. They knocked once and knocked twice, but no one came. At the third attempt an old woman appeared; she looked haggard and wild-eyed, and bade them depart quickly.

'Whatever you may want of us, go away quickly,' she said; 'there is cholera in the house. Is it a demand for money?'

'We wish to see Ivan Sotsky,' began Peter.

'He is dead, my friend; he died this night, and his wife will die before morning. I am Ivan's mother. Go, I say, quickly, for the air of the place is poison.'

Paul and the Eagle had already drawn back a little, for the word Cholera is one of the most hated and the most feared in the Russian language, so terrible are the ravages of the disease when once it obtains a hold upon the peasants in the villages.

'Give the poor thing money, Peter,' said the Count, 'and come away.'

Peter gave her a rouble, whereat the old hag sobbed out grateful thanks.

'May you all escape the plague,' she said. 'Do not visit the villages west and south of this, for they are all infected.'

'We go where we must,' said Paul. 'We are fugitives. Can you tell us the name of the village and of the peasant who is the next to poor Ivan on the list of those who are kind to the unfortunate?'

The old hag seemed afraid. 'I know nothing of such things; I did not even know that my poor Ivan was upon such a list, but I thank God it was so. If a man is merciful upon earth, mercy shall be meted to him in Heaven. Alas! I cannot help you.'

The sound of crying and the groans of one in pain suddenly came from within the house, and the old hag turned with an exclamation: 'I must go; the pains have taken her,' she muttered.

The three fugitives left the house, and went silently through the village and out into the plain beyond. Then Paul spoke.

'Ivan's death is a great calamity to us,' he said; 'for with his name ends the list of helpers as far as we know it, and he was to have supplied the next name. What is to be done?'

'Let us go forward until it is nearly light, then seek some deserted or tumble-down hut—we have seen plenty such—and take refuge there.'

This was the Eagle's suggestion, and it seemed a practical one, if only the desired shelter could be found just when it should be needed.

Passing through a village about four miles further on, they found, at the outskirts of the place, just such a tumble-down barn as seemed to suit their purpose. They lit a match and examined the interior. It was not used as a dwelling-place, that was certain. A rickety old ladder led up to a bare garret, the floor of which had half fallen in.

'The very place,' said Paul, 'if it will bear our weight. Those Cossack chaps will have searched this village long ago.'

All three were as weary as they could be. They made their supper from their provisions, of which they still had plenty in their knapsacks, and lay down to sleep. (*Continued on page* 194.)

THE SCULPTOR.

BEFORE the block the sculptor stands,
With strong and patient will;
The graving tool within his hands,
He works with strength and skill.

And soon from out the marble hewn,
When he has wrought with care,
The chips and splinters round him strewn—
Behold the statue fair:

A noble, sweet, embodied thought,
A purpose wisely planned,
A work with skill and beauty fraught—
The labour of his hand.

So may we bring to noble act
The purposes we dream,
And make into a lovely fact
The thing that did but seem.

AN EDITOR'S INDUSTRY.

IN preparing an edition of Shakespeare for the press, Mr. Steevens gave an instance of editorial activity and perseverance which has been seldom equalled. For a period of eighteen months he devoted himself entirely to the work, and during that time he left his house every morning at one o'clock, and proceeded, without any regard for weather, to the chambers of a friend in Staple Inn, where a portion of the letter-press was lying ready for his revision; so that while the printers were sleeping the editor was awake, and the whole edition of fifteen large volumes was completed in the space of twenty months.

WHAT FLAX DOES.

EVEN to-day it is possible to go into some parts of England and see a whole field of flax, but we more often come upon this little plant beside a hedgerow or on a waste patch of ground. Its flowers are frail; the cup-like ball of blue falls with a touch, but the plant itself is tough in fibre. Hundreds of years ago somebody discovered that from the stalks of flax could be made the valuable article called linen. An old writer remarks: 'First from seed came flax; then, after much trouble, thread; then cloth was cut to suit the fashion of the time, and afterwards was cast aside; but, being unwilling to forsake the service of man, it took a nobler form, and served many uses.' By his ending, he means to tell us that paper was usually manufactured from old linen rags. But not much paper of this sort comes into the market at present, owing to inventions which allow other materials to be used.

It is not easy work, turning flax into linen. First, the stems have to be softened, so that the fibres may be separated from the soft portions of the plant. Then they are plunged into tanks, or laid upon grass for a time, till fit to be spun into yarn.

Flax is also valuable for its seeds, which are full of oil, and this, well known as linseed oil, is useful in various ways, while the seeds themselves, when crushed, make an excellent poultice. A favourite English bird has been called, because of its liking for these seeds, the linnet, or lint-white. Formerly it was the custom in Brittany for people to gather little bunches of the flax and wear them in their hats or caps on St. John's Eve. These bunches were supposed to bring good fortune, and ward off danger from witches! The Bohemians had a custom of sending children out to dance amongst the flax, believing that this would make them beautiful.

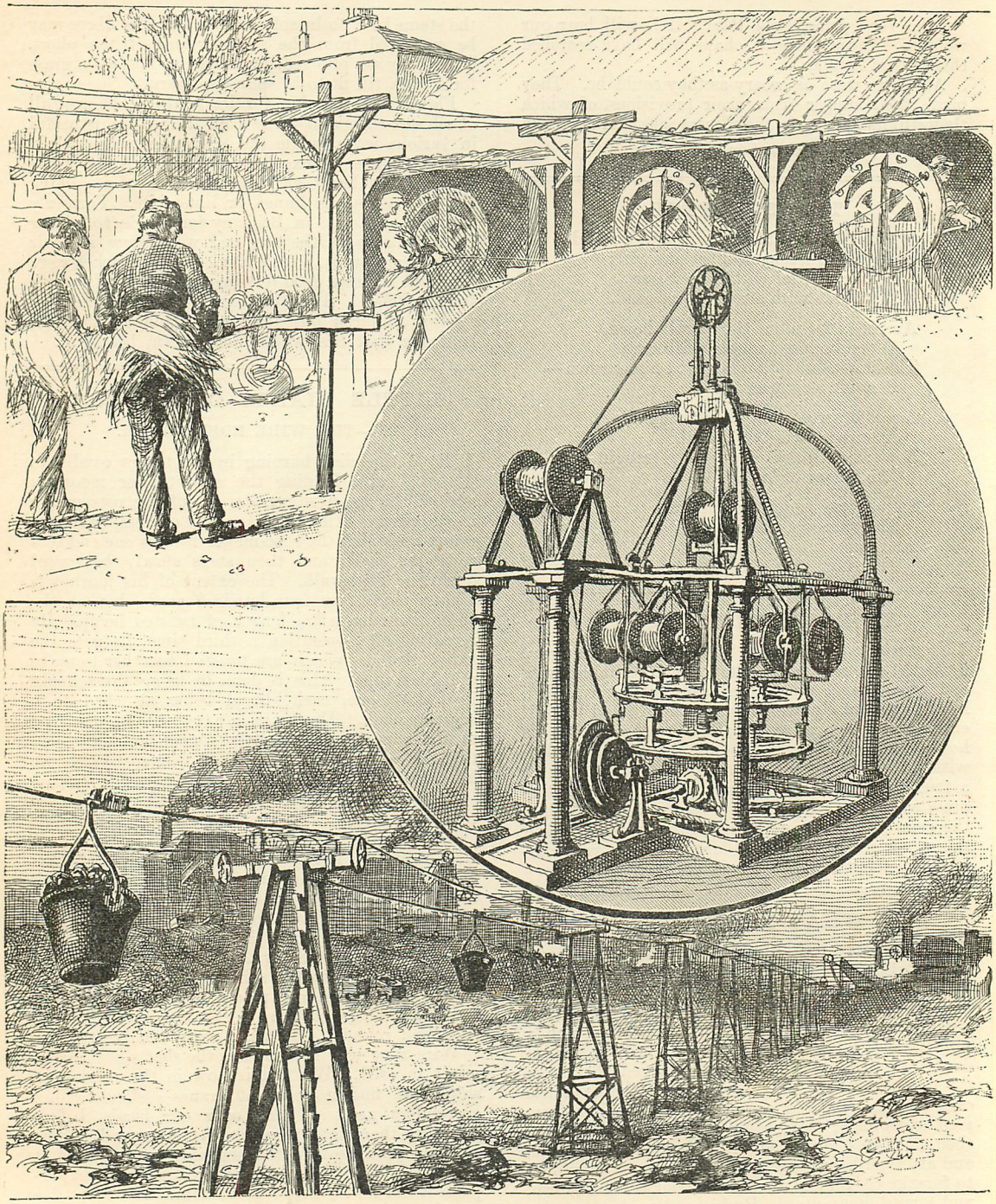
LITTLE GIANTS OF LABOUR.

V.—THE WIRE ROPE-MAKER.

FROM the wick burning in the tallow candle, to the cable holding the ship to her moorings against the ocean storm, the art of the rope-maker is exhibited. With a good supply of hemp wrapped round his waist, the rope-maker fastens one end to a revolving hook, and then steps slowly backward down the rope-walk. The extent of his journey is seldom more than four hundred yards, but at the end of it he has a fine length of twisted hemp. By repeating this operation a third time, he gets the three 'strands' which are twisted together to make a finished rope. This is done by using three hooks instead of one, each strand being attached to a separate hook. The art is a very ancient one, and in this manner were the ropes woven that controlled the sails of the earliest ships of whose voyages we have any record.

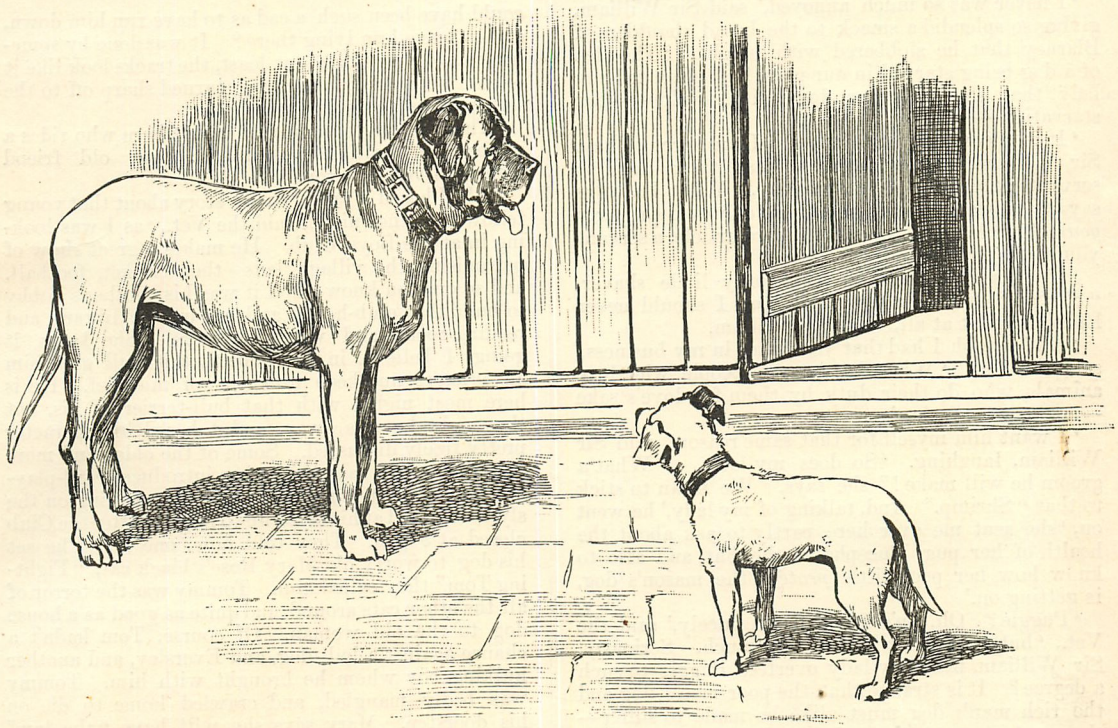
Of recent years the wire cable has been a rival to the hempen rope. It does not (to any appreciable extent) shrink or expand with change of weather; it is stronger; it can be made in greater lengths; and it does not wear out so quickly. Our model, drawn after the model in the South Kensington Museum, shows the mode of manufacture. From each of the six 'bobbins' the wire or strand is led to one point (called the lay top), and here they are all twisted together by the spinning of the disc above which the bobbins are placed. The wire unspins from the central bobbin, forms the 'core' of the rope, and round it the other wires are twisted.

Wire rope was first used in the shafts of our coal mines in 1831. We find it now in the rigging of ships; we find it on great cranes — slender lines suspending great weights over our heads, before swinging them into place at the command of the workmen who govern the engines; and we find it extensively used for wire railways. For such purposes it has taken the place of chain. A short time ago the present writer watched one busily employed between the pit-head of a Yorkshire mine and the station of a real railway quite a mile away. There were two lines of rails side by side. Down one of these rolled the trucks laden with coal, dragging behind them the long wire rope, which was passed



Rope Walk—Old Style. Wire Rope-maker—New Style. Wire Rope Railway.

round a pulley at the pit-head and down the other line of rails to the empty trucks at the distant station. It was interesting to watch this busy little train roll down the long iron hill, meet the train that it was hauling up, and finally disappear in the distance. The wire rope was of such a length that, at the moment the full trucks reached the railway, the empty ones arrived at the pit-head.



"I met Blarney."

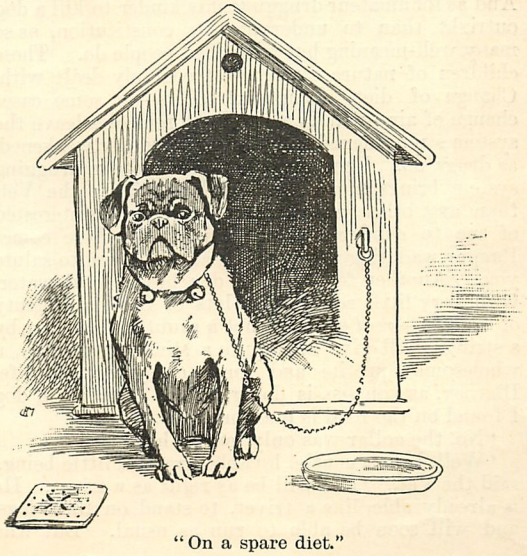
NOBODY'S DOG.

(*Continued from page* 180.)

ALL that day, and for several more, I was glad to lie quietly on my bed, carefully fed on light food, and allowed to limp about the yard as I liked till I began to feel my strength coming back, and with it the old tingle in my legs and a desire to romp. There were other dogs in the yard. Of these, some were too ill to come out, and others well enough to be taken for long walks, or to run loose in the paddock beyond the yard, so that I had been about a week at the Vet.'s before I found out that it was from Blarney's nose that the comfortable snoring came each night. I met him one day as soon as I was well enough to run in the paddock myself, and he told me that Sir William had sent him there for a change of air and to get up his strength.

'There was a pretty snarling and growling after you had gone, I can tell you,' he said. 'Stephens got a month's notice to leave, and then he promised the little stable-boy the best whacking he ever had in his life for having told about me. So the stable-boy told my lady, and Stephens was ordered off at once, and I was brought here. And now I am never to be kept on a chain again for more than just half an hour or so at a time, which no reasonable dog could object to, just to let people see that there is somebody with a head on his shoulders looking after the back door. The little stable-boy is to fetch me home soon and to see after me, and to let my lady know how I get on.'

As Blarney finished, who should walk into the yard but Sir William himself, talking earnestly to the Vet. The big mastiff went and bowed himself down at his master's feet.



"On a spare diet."

'I never was so much annoyed,' said Sir William, giving so splendid a smack to the broad shoulders of Blarney that he slobbered with delight. 'The idea of a dog being starved in our place! I often tell my lady that she kills her dogs with kindness—but starvation——'

'It is a common case enough, I am sorry to say, Sir William, where owners trust their dogs to servants who are not trustworthy. What I always say to masters is, "Look after your own property *yourself*, unless you possess that rare article, a servant you can trust *like* yourself."'

'If it hadn't been for that jolly little shaver, "Shrimp," as I hear they call him, I should never have known it at all,' said Sir William.

'Ah! I wish I had that youngster in my business,' said the Vet. 'What I want are people who love animals, who do their duty by them for love's sake—not as eye-service.'

'I want him myself for that same reason,' said Sir William, laughing. 'So does my lady. "What a groom he will make!" she says. We mean to stick to that "Shrimp." And, talking of my lady,' he went on, 'she sent me over here, partly to ask about the health of her pug, Bucephalus the Fat, and also to know how her poor little *protégé*, the mason's dog, is getting on.'

'Puggie? Oh, he's fining down nicely,' said the Vet., 'but he doesn't like it very much. Seriously, Sir William, must my lady overfeed Puggie to such a degree? It is strange that the poor man's dog and the rich man's dog must alike be made to suffer—the one from too little, and the other from too much. If only Lady Crofton would cut off Puggie's tit-bits—his chocolate creams, his roast chicken, his mutton cutlets and jam tarts—poor Puggie would not have been handed over to me, to keep his fasts. To tell you the truth, Sir William, that is all I do for Puggie. I keep him on a spare diet till he has recovered from over-stuffing, for there is no humbug about me; I don't mind telling you that I don't believe in drugging animals, except in rare cases. And as for amateur drugging, it is kinder to kill a dog outright than to undermine its constitution, as so many well-meaning but misguided people do. These children of nature cannot be too simply dealt with. Change of diet, change of habits—in some cases change of air—will do all. These remedies leave the system strengthened, and not permanently weakened, as drugs do. I consider that the amateur drugging system brings more dogs hopelessly ill to the Vet. than any other cause; therefore it is disinterested of me to condemn the practice. But here comes Puggie waddling up, snorting as he comes, to salute you. Another fortnight of dry biscuit and water, with very little added to it, lots of fresh air, plenty of exercise—*real* exercise, not a saunter, led along by a string—will give him quite a slim waist again, a wholesome appetite and some enjoyment of life. Blarney, as you see, is doing finely. The little dog I found on the road is not your own, then?'

'No, the collar was only lent to him.'

'Well, he is a gentle, lovable, grateful little being,' said the Vet., 'and will be as right as a trivet. He is already able, like a trivet, to stand on three legs, and will soon be able to run as usual. But who could have been such a cad as to have run him down, and to leave him lying there? It was done by somebody on a motor-bike—at least, the tracks look like it—but whoever did the thing turned sharp off to the left, perhaps to avoid notice.'

'There is only one person about here who rides a motor-bike,' said Sir William: 'my old friend General Eversley's son.'

'Ah, I heard a rather shady story about that young fellow the other night,' said the Vet., 'as I was looking in at the Boys' Club. He makes a great show of patronising the village lads—their cricket, football, and so on, you know; and it was his mother's hobby to build that club-house and set up the library and reading-room, and what-not there. She keeps it going, I believe, in the hope that it will give him an interest and keep him out of mischief. He is here most nights with that bull-terrier of his, but that night he was away, and I heard his character pretty freely discussed. Some of the older and more respectable lads say that he has introduced card-playing and cigarette-smoking, and even gambling on the sly, and hinted at his being up to no good after the Club closed at 9 p.m. They told how, one night, he set his dog to worry old Mary Rose's black cat, "Fighting Tom" they called him. Tommy was the terror of all the other cats around, and quite as good as a house dog to the old woman. Of course, Tom hadn't a chance against a bull-dog, and Eversley, and another hulking boy whom he brought with him. Tommy was badly mangled, and crawled home to die on his doorstep. Mary says she will have "the law" of whoever did it, and of course she could get damages, if she could prove it. The Club boys, of course, wouldn't tell, but they said that Brindle, the bull-dog, won't go at a cat at all unless his master bids him.

'I never liked his look,' said Sir William; 'he has a look—what shall I call it?—a shifty look—as if he had done something to be ashamed of; that is, something he would be ashamed that people should know.'

(*Continued on page* 195.)

SAVED BY DANCING.

THE battleship *Dominion* was cautiously feeling her way towards Quebec on the night of August 16th, 1906, when the navigating officer, misled by a bush fire on land, took the wrong bearings, and suddenly struck on a hidden reef with such force that the huge ship was shaken from stem to stern.

Orders were at once given for the whole crew, officers as well as men, to assemble on deck with their kits in their hands, and all the eight hundred and fifty men were told to dance, so as to keep the ship 'alive,' and so prevent the *Dominion's* keel from settling down on the ledge.

At first the bluejackets whistled an accompaniment to keep the men in step till the Captain ordered the ship's band to play lively selections.

The men danced with a will, stamping their feet and swaying their bodies, and doing all they could to rock the ship. In the end they succeeded, for

finally, with the engines working full speed astern, the *Dominion* slowly gave way, and backed again into deep water.

The dancing had saved the ship!

FOR VALOUR.

THE holidays were over, and the departure-platform at Liverpool Street was dotted with groups of boys returning to St. Stephen's School, nearly all surrounded by friends and relations waiting to see them off.

Donald Murray, with all the importance of fourteen years, stood somewhat aloof, feeling rather sorry for the boys being embraced by tearful mothers and sisters, and almost persuaded that he was glad he had no one to 'make a silly fuss' over him. His own mother, always rather too busy to take much notice of her boy, thought he was quite old enough to travel alone, and Donald felt the responsibility of his position. He set his new cap at a manly angle, and bought a supply of illustrated papers, and sweet refreshments for the journey, with the coolness of a seasoned traveller, and then strolled up and down the platform.

In spite of his indifferent air, however, Donald was really very keenly on the alert, and watched the barrier with eagerness. It was known to him that Major Merriman, V.C., hero of many battles, intended sending his only son to St. Stephen's, and he cherished a great hope that the Major might be there to see the boy off. The Major was an old St. Stephenite himself, so that his heroic deeds in the late war had been followed with breathless interest by all St. Stephen's boys, and the gallant officer had no more whole-hearted admirer than Donald Murray.

As he looked anxiously toward the barrier for about the fiftieth time, Donald could hardly restrain a cry of delight, for there was the military figure so familiar to him from photographs and newspaper pictures, and with him a small boy, looking rather unhappy at the prospect before him. The pair strolled down the platform, then stopped quite close to the delighted Donald, who gazed admiringly at his hero, noting his every movement, and unconsciously holding himself more erect and straight in imitation of the Major.

Then his attention was drawn away by the sound of a childish voice.

'Hullo, Donnie!' it said clearly; and the pet-name brought a frown to Donald's face.

The shrill tone had attracted the Major's attention too, and he turned from his keen survey of the groups of schoolboys to see who was speaking. Donald's independent air and bright, open face interested him, and he watched the boy rather closely.

Cyril had come close to his cousin, and held up his face, evidently expecting to be kissed. Donald flushed a little; he was one of the big boys of the school—too old for that sort of thing, he considered, and, besides, suppose the Major should see him kissing like a girl! So he looked down at his seven-year-old cousin with a superior air.

'Well, Cyril,' he said, calmly, 'where are your people?'

Cyril's face fell sadly. 'Mother's ill, and so I'm going alone. Father was too busy to wait for the train after bringing me here.'

Donald saw that the child meant to stay with him, and the idea did not please him. It would be worse than having a lot of sisters crying over one, to act nursemaid to a small boy of seven.

'You had better run along and look after your luggage,' he suggested. 'I expect it's down at the other end of the platform.' And he opened a magazine, while Cyril obediently, but very sadly, moved away.

But Donald didn't find the paper interesting, somehow, because Cyril's lonely little figure would keep appearing before his eyes. It recalled the first time *he* had gone to school alone—many terms ago now, it seemed—and how very miserable he had felt. He looked down the platform and saw a small, dejected figure standing by a pile of newly labelled luggage. Donald shut up his paper impatiently, and wondered why people couldn't look after their children, or send a nursemaid with them, as his mother did when he was as young as Cyril. Then he looked again. Cyril was rubbing his eyes vigorously with doubled fists, evidently doing his best to keep the tears back. Donald suddenly remembered that action—he had done it himself once upon a time—and it made him feel a bit choky about the throat. Forgetting his grown-up-ness for the moment, he walked up to Cyril.

'What's up, kid?' he said roughly, but not unkindly.

'You didn't want me,' said Cyril, sadly, 'and it's so big and lonely here. Are you *very* cross, Donnie?'

Somehow that choking sensation stopped Donald's answer; then he bent down suddenly and brushed a light, hasty kiss on Cyril's forehead.

'Come and choose something to read,' he said, gruffly, 'and you can come in the carriage with me, only don't blub.'

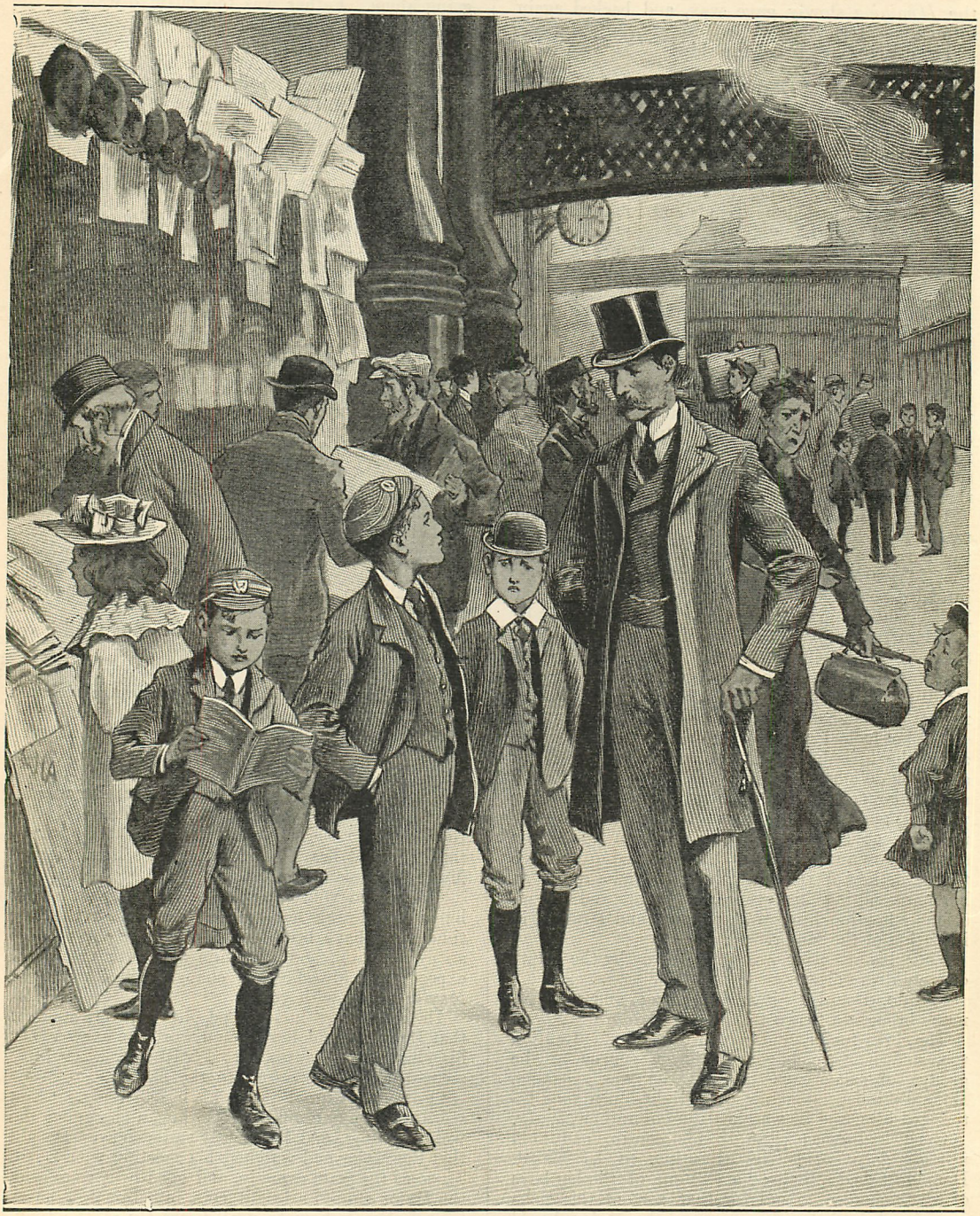
But Cyril's face was radiant. Everything was all right now that Donald had spoken to him. Together they went to the bookstall; then, as they turned away, Donald heard some one address him. It was Major Merriman who spoke.

'I see from your cap you are a St. Stephen's boy,' he said. 'Frank here is going down for the first time, and I have been looking for some one to keep an eye on him, and give him a hint or two, for I expect the old school is changed since my time. May he travel with you?'

The unexpected honour and pleasure were so great that Donald could hardly find words to answer, but his simple 'Of course, sir; I will look after him,' seemed quite satisfactory to the Major.

'I am sure you will,' was his hearty reply. 'You see, I've already noticed that you can champion the weaker fellow,' and his kindly smile showed Donald that the Major had watched his meeting with Cyril. Then, as the train came in, and good-byes were said, the Major slipped a bright coin into Donald's hand. 'Teach Frank how to deal discreetly at the tuck-shop,' he said with a smile.

But not even a tip such as he had never had before was so treasured by Donald as the Major's warm, approving smile and friendly hand-shake.



"'Of course, sir; I will look after him.'"

THE TALKATIVE MAGPIE AND ARTFUL FOX.

"The men ran like hares."

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 187.)

NOW, most unfortunately, the small boys of the village were in the habit of using the old cottage in which the fugitives were hidden as a kind of playground. Some time before noon three of them entered the place in search of hidden companions, the party being intent upon a game of hide-and-seek. One ran up the rickety ladder in order to inspect the garret. He went cautiously, for he did not wish to be heard; but he careered down the steps like one who flees for dear life from some terrible horror.

'Didka—Vainka!' he shrieked, safely out of the cottage. 'Come quickly! There are men—probably thieves or murderers—asleep in the loft.'

Didka and Vainka came quickly.

'Show us!' they said. 'Where?'

'In the loft. Come very softly.'

The three boys crept up noiselessly and gazed. Then they stole downstairs and went and informed Didka's father, who was Starost (or elder) of the place.

The Starost, in his turn, mounted the stairs, cautiously examined the sleepers, and descended. He went to the head policeman of the village.

'You saw the Cossacks yesterday,' he said: 'they examined the village for three fugitives from Yermatsky. Well, I have found the fellows. You had better get into your sledge, and go to Polsk for a detachment to come and fetch them. Meanwhile I shall take half-a-dozen men and put them in the village lock-up.'

'Good. Shall I help?'

'No; go for the soldiers. I will see to the rest. Waste no time.'

The Starost went round and collected a dozen men. It was a large village, and though cholera had appeared and had attacked a few of the inhabitants, he had no difficulty in assembling his little army. These heroes brought scythes, sticks, pitchforks, and such weapons, and one had an old shot-gun, which he loaded with a handful of large shot, such as he kept by him in case of a visitation of wolves.

Then the Starost drew up his host in the ground floor of the cottage, and bravely mounted the ladder into the loft. The sleepers were all awake, he found, having heard the commotion below. The Eagle had instantly suggested a leap down the stairs and a rush for freedom.

'No,' said Paul. 'Always learn the extent of the danger before acting; take orders from me, both of you. A man is coming upstairs. Hold yourselves ready, but do not fire without orders. Well, my friend, what is it?'

'Who are you,' asked the Starost, 'and what do you here?'

'We are travellers.'

'You do not travel like honest men; you are fugitives. The soldiers are after three such as you. I have come with a force to arrest you.'

'Then go back again to your house; we do not intend to be arrested. Out of the way—we are coming downstairs.'

Down scuttled the Starost. 'They are coming!' he cried excitedly. 'Fall upon them all together, four upon each, and hold them; do not kill, the price is double for live men!'

Paul stood on the stairs and looked down. 'You had better go, all!' he cried. 'I am armed and am going to shoot.' With the words he fired a shot over the Starost's head.

Instantly the whole of the thirteen men rushed pell-mell out of the cottage.

'Now,' said Paul, 'come along, both of you. If they are standing outside, fire, but not at them, over them. Probably they will let us pass; if not, we shall have to fight. No one is to be captured, of course! Now, then, walk quietly out, all!'

CHAPTER XXII.

PAUL walked quietly out of the hut, followed by the Eagle and Peter. Not a soul appeared to contest their passage; the Starost and his dozen men stood grouped together, twenty yards away, shouting and gesticulating, threatening with their assorted weapons; one of them fired a shot with his old muzzle-loading gun, which he had charged with a handful of powder and a huge charge of shot. The pellets whistled around the heads of the trio standing by the door of the hut; one of them grazed the Eagle's shoulder, drawing blood, but not inflicting a bad wound. The Eagle uttered an exclamation of anger, however, and raised his pistol to return the fire.

'Over their heads!' Paul cried, warningly.

The Eagle fired, laughing. 'I don't want to kill any one,' he said, 'but a chap put a shot in my shoulder; I should like to make him smart a bit!'

The shot flew wide, but its effect was excellent. Perhaps the Starost heard it whistle over his head; at any rate, he turned and ran for the village, and his army ran with him. Paul sent a couple of shots after them—or, rather, over them—to hasten their movements, and the men ran like hares, the Starost giving them a good lead. The man with the gun turned and fired a second shot with his 'muzzle-stuffer,' but a scornful laugh from the fugitives was all that came of the effort.

'Were you really hit, Mark?' asked Paul. 'Can you run? Is it bad?'

'Of course I can; it's nothing,' replied the Eagle. 'It's only a scratch on the shoulder; it won't affect my legs!'

At the name 'Mark,' old Peter started violently.

'Why do you call him "Mark"?' he asked suddenly, when the party had jogged along on a trot for a short while.

Paul laughed. 'For no particular reason,' he said, 'excepting that we are said to be "doubles." I had a twin of the name of Mark, as you know, and we sometimes pretend to one another we are brothers for want of something better to play at.'

'But he is a peasant's son, and he says his real name is Cyril,' said old Peter. 'If Count Mark had lived, and had been brought up by some peasant who found him, surely we should have found him long ago.

'Of course,' Paul laughed, 'it is only a joke. He is not really *my* Mark—I only wish he were. Mark died as a child.'

'Yes—as a child. Do you wish this were your brother—a peasant?'

'What of that? A peasant may be as good as a lord, and the Eagle is a grand fellow; so are you yourself, though you are a peasant, and foolish sometimes, besides!'

The Eagle heard all this and laughed, but his shoulder was uncomfortable, and he was thinking more of his discomfort than of the conversation.

Apparently they were not pursued; the fact that they were armed had deterred the villagers. As a matter of fact, the Starost was now holding a council with his peasants at his own house. The result of their deliberations will be seen presently.

(*Continued on page* 207.)

THE FAIRY ARTIST.

ACROSS the sky at close of day
A fairy artist goes,
To paint the sunset's circling clouds
With purple, gold, and rose.

When darkness falls upon the fields,
'Tis then he makes his way
To tint the daisies' lids with pink
Before the dawn of day.

The stately lily's golden spike,
The cowslip's speckled bell,
The foxglove and the clover-bloom—
He visits these as well.

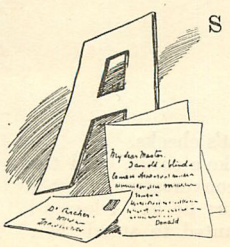
He decks each brilliant dragon-fly
In brightest green and blue,
Then hangs each web of gossamer
With pearls of morning dew.

But no one ever yet has seen
This wondrous artist fay,
Who does his work so silently,
Then quickly speeds away.

NOBODY'S DOG.

(*Continued from page* 190.)

CHAPTER VII.



AS Sir William trotted away on his handsome horse, an old man came up, followed by an aged and lame dog.

'Good morning, Pat,' said the Vet., who caught sight of him from the yard. 'Anything wrong with the dog?'

The old man shook his head. 'I am sadly afraid, sir, that there is something the matter with poor old Laddie, which only graveyard mould can cure. We have been fast friends these twenty years.'

'Oh, indeed,' said the Vet. 'Then you are afraid the time for parting company has come?'

'I am afraid so, sir. Last winter I was bad myself, but you know my way, sir. I believe in simple food, cold water, clean straw for a bed, green fields for a carpet, and the blue sky for a roof. I left my hut yonder, that Sir William was kind enough to let me build on the common, and took to the open for a time. Laddie and my flute and I—we tramped gipsy fashion, sir. I call it lodging with Mrs. Greenfields, and it put me right, sir. My father was a gipsy—my mother too—and it's in my blood, sir.'

'I know you are a wanderer, Pat.'

'Yes, sir. I and my old Laddie here have footed it together pretty well all over England and Wales, let alone Scotland, where he was born. My flute here is the bread-winner for both. I can wile the tears out of folk's eyes, and the money out of their purses too, with this. I have been in such low water before now, sir, that I had to sell my coat for bread—then it came to parting either with Laddie or the flute. I had a handsome silver-mounted instrument then; I need not tell you which of them went.'

'The flute, of course.'

'To be sure, sir—but the loss to me was great. I went to the nearest river-side, sir, and cut myself a reed and blew through it—it was born in me, sir—the music. The very birds, sir, will stop to listen to me. Hark, sir!'

He drew from his pocket a common-looking reed flute, and imitated so closely the warble of one wild songster after another, that, as the old man said, the winged creatures themselves might have been cheated into answering back.

'When we are hard up, or need money for the winter,' the piper went on, 'I make a store of such reed flutes as these, and travel afar on foot, as far as London, to hawk them in the streets. They look for "Piping Pat," as they nickname me, each year at the same corner. I play a few notes, and the Cockneys are crazy to buy the pipes—the very pipe on which I play. They soon find out, poor simpletons, that I can't sell the music I have breathed into it, any more than I can sell them the fresh breath of heaven, so sorely needed in their crowded homes. Laddie and I reap a rich harvest, and go roaming back, with a pack strapped to my back of such things as we need for the long journey, or, maybe, some of the London trash, that London people think so fine, to sell upon the road. But we are getting old for the work now.'

The Vet. stood looking gravely and kindly at the pair.

'Come in, Pat, and rest, and let old Laddie have a drink of water. Why, he's getting blind, eh?'

'Time was when no collie on the Highland hills was better-sighted than he,' said Pat, seating himself on a bench placed in the yard. 'His parents were both sheep-dogs, and he was born while his mother was tending her master's sheep, and had little time to think of her own family. I found him lying alone on the hills. When I had saved a little money, I bought a few sheep for myself, and once, when I was overcome with cold in the wilds, looking after them,

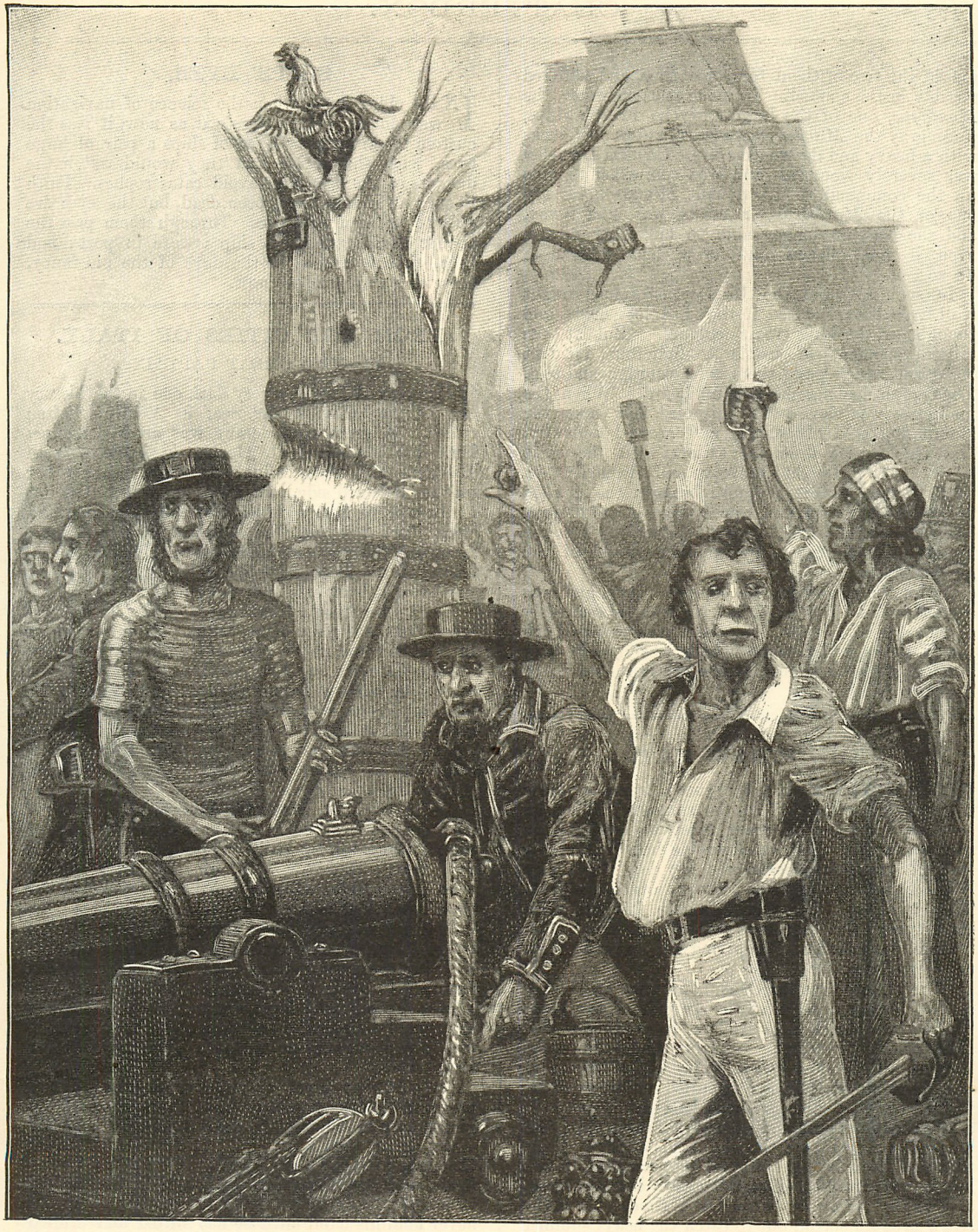
"I owed my life to him many a time."

this old fellow, sir, stiff and useless as he now is, was a tender nurse to me. He saved the sheep too, sir. He would first come and look at me anxiously, and lie on my chest to warm me, trying to say with his eyes, 'I wish I could be in two places at once!' then, after licking my face and hands, would tear back to the sheep, keep them all together, and keep them moving. I owed my life to him many a time.'

Here the tears rolled down Pat's cheeks.

'Some think there is no dog like a collie,' said the Vet., cheerfully, to turn the conversation, 'but I love any dog, no matter what sort he is. I love all animals. It was because I wanted to stand their friend that I became a surgeon to animals rather than to human beings. I served as an Army Vet. for years.'

(*Continued on page* 203.)



"The bird crowed defiantly."

A TIMELY LEADER.

IN the battle fought on the first of June, 1794, between Lord Howe's fleet and the French, in the Bay of Biscay, the *Marlborough*, a British battleship of seventy-four guns, commanded by the Hon. George Berkeley, was hard pressed. She had attacked a French seventy-four, named the *Impétueux*, which, in a little while, was joined by the *Mucius*, another seventy-four. The *Marlborough*

fought the two of them for some time, and suffered terribly in the contest. To make matters worse, the *Montague*, one of the largest of the French ships, passing by the *Marlborough's* stern, swept her decks with a heavy and destructive fire. Captain Berkeley was severely wounded, and was compelled to give up the command to Lieutenant Monkton. Every one of the *Marlborough's* masts was shot away, and she was no longer able to make her escape, even if her officers and crew had wished to do so.

In such a plight the *Marlborough's* men might well have been excused if they had lost heart, and thought of striking their colours. But at the critical moment of battle a ludicrous incident occurred, which gave them new courage and zeal. The captain had a game-cock on board. When the mainmast was shot away, this bird flew upon the stump, fluttered his wings, and crowed defiantly. His fearlessness fired the sailors with the same spirit. They fought bravely and doggedly on, until Captain Robert Stopford brought the *Aquilon* frigate to their help, and towed them out of danger. The *Mucius* and the *Montague* escaped, but the *Impétueux* was taken by another vessel of the British fleet.

As for the game-cock, he escaped injury, and was carried back to Portsmouth. He was subsequently given to Lord Lennox, and there was prepared for him a silver collar, upon which was inscribed an account of his distinguished bravery in the service of his country.

THE STRAW HAT.

NOWADAYS almost everybody wears a straw hat of some kind in the summer. What an enormous amount of straw must be used in the manufacture of these innumerable hats! And *any* kind of straw, it appears, will not do. Great care has to be taken in order to procure suitable material. The American Consul at Florence has described in a report the ingenious methods of the Italian makers in growing and preparing the straw destined to go into hats.

'The wheat,' says the Consul, 'is sown as thickly as possible, in order that the growth of the plant may be impoverished, as well as to produce a thin stalk, having toward the end, from the last knot, the lightest and longest straw. The wheat blooms at the beginning of June, and is pulled out by hand by the roots when the grain is half developed. If allowed to remain in the ground a longer time, the straw would become brittle. About five dozen uprooted branches, the size of the compass of two hands, are firmly tied together into little sheaves, and stowed away in barns for a time. Then the straw is again spread out to catch the heavy summer dews and to bleach in the sun. After additional bleaching, the straw is cut in small bundles and classified. Finally it is cut close above the first joint from the top, and again tied up in small bundles, containing about sixty stalks each, and delivered to women in almost every private dwelling of the lower classes.'

SHIPS' EYES.

IN the olden days, when the science of navigation was not as well understood as now, it was the custom to carve in the bows of ships a pair of large eyes, with the notion that they would watch the dangers of the deep and avoid catastrophes. Faith in such an idea has long been dead, but the eyes are still to be seen on ships. Through them pass the anchor chains when the ship is safe in port; and thus, though useless in the days of the old fancy, they fill a good purpose now.

FROM THE CITIES OF ITALY.

VI.—TWO GREAT CAPTAINS.

THE year 1379 was a very dark one in the history of the 'City of the Sea,' as Venice is often called. A great confederacy was arrayed against her: her old sea-rival, Genoa, in alliance with Hungary, and with Padua ever ready to harass her on the landward side. In May, her fleet, fitted out at the cost of heavy duties imposed upon food and wine, took the sea, the Admiral, Vettor Pisani, receiving the great standard of St. Mark from the hands of the Doge, with the exhortation, 'See that you bring it back safe and victorious.'

But Vettor Pisani, like many a leader before and since, was not given a free hand. Those who ruled in Venice could not be content to allow the greatest naval strategist in their service to conduct the expedition without having themselves a finger in the pie, and Pisani was harassed by orders and counter-orders, and at last forced to join battle at Pola, sorely against his own judgment. All that a brave man could do to retrieve the blunder, the Venetian Admiral did that day.

'Who loves St. Mark for Venice, let him follow me!' he cried, as he flung himself into the thick of the fighting, killing the Genoese Admiral with his own hand. But it was all in vain, the Venetians were utterly defeated, and the enemy seemed to have the city at their mercy.

Vettor Pisani must have known well enough what awaited him when he took the remnants of his fleet back to the city, where there was no mercy for failure. It made no difference that his advice, had it been taken, might have averted the catastrophe; he was first sentenced to death, though the sentence was afterwards commuted into imprisonment for seven years.

So, with her great commander imprisoned and prevented by the hands of his fellow-citizens from giving help or counsel, the darkest hour of her peril came upon the Republic. The Genoese seized Chioggia, always looked upon as the key to Venice itself, and the fierce Carara, lord of Padua, replied in answer to an appeal for a truce that he would never hold his hand until he had bitted and bridled the horses of St. Mark, the mighty bronze figures brought by the famous blind Doge, Enrico Dandolo, from Constantinople. But in the hour of her necessity, the love and courage of the sons of Venice rose to the occasion.

'Let us man every ship in Venice, and let us go to fight the enemy,' was the cry that went up from the

crowd gathered in the Gran' Piazza, to learn from their rulers the true state of the case. Heavy as the taxation had been already, money flowed in from all sides: one stalwart citizen, who had nothing else left to give, coming to offer himself and his two sons to shed their life-blood, if need were, for the Republic.

And then arose a demand for the leader in whom the whole city had confidence. What was Vettor Pisani doing in prison, when none but he could lead the fleet to victory? The rulers, who had probably regretted their folly long before this, yielded readily enough, though with a great show of magnanimity, and Pisani was pardoned and released. We might be disposed to think that the forgiveness should have been rather on the side of the injured Admiral; but Pisani was no Coriolanus, to punish his ungrateful country by turning against her. From his prison he went straight to St. Mark's, there to return thanks for his freedom where best they were due, and then he presented himself, calm and ready for action, before the Senate, who were even now so wanting in magnanimity as to give him only the second command. But his sailors, with one voice, refused to fight under any one but Pisani, adding, the old Chronicle tells us, 'many wicked words,' and the Senate, not daring to risk mutiny at such a moment, hastened to give Pisani the place due to him. So, after a solemn service, the fleet, with the Doge and almost the whole male population on board, set sail for Chioggia.

A weary time of warfare it was that followed in the short, dark winter days, while Venice, with her supplies cut off, was on the verge of famine, and cold and hunger aided the deadly flights of arrows from the Genoese forts. If Pisani and the Doge gained a slight success one day, it was only to lose ground the next, and at last even the gallantry of their Admiral failed to sustain the courage of the half-famished sailors. There were whispers about abandoning Venice and setting sail with wives and children, and such treasure as was left, to find a new home elsewhere, and there were daily demands that the useless attempt to retake Chioggia should be given up. Only one hope could Pisani hold out, and that was of reinforcements from the sea, where another great captain, Carlo Zeno, who had been in turn scholar, soldier, trader, and sailor, was chasing Genoese vessels, and attacking the enemy's ports in the service of the Republic. Messengers had been sent to seek and summon him, and Pisani at last pledged his word to his men to raise the siege on the first of January, unless Carlo arrived. With what anxious eyes must the harassed Admiral have scanned the horizon for the sail of the colleague who never failed to bring cheer and courage with him. All too fast for him, with the honour and perhaps the very life of his city at stake, the last days of the old year ebbed away. It must have seemed indeed like a very sunrise of hope when, on the first of January, 1380, Carlo Zeno, with fourteen galleys, fully equipped with provisions and men, entered the port of Chioggia.

No better man could have been found to lead a forlorn hope. Carlo Zeno had the dashing gallantry which sailors love, the quickness of wit which sees an opportunity, and the promptness of action which makes use of it, and he had also a gift of oratory, by which he could sway and inspire those under him. But his courage and ingenuity was taxed to the uttermost in the months that followed his arrival outside Chioggia.

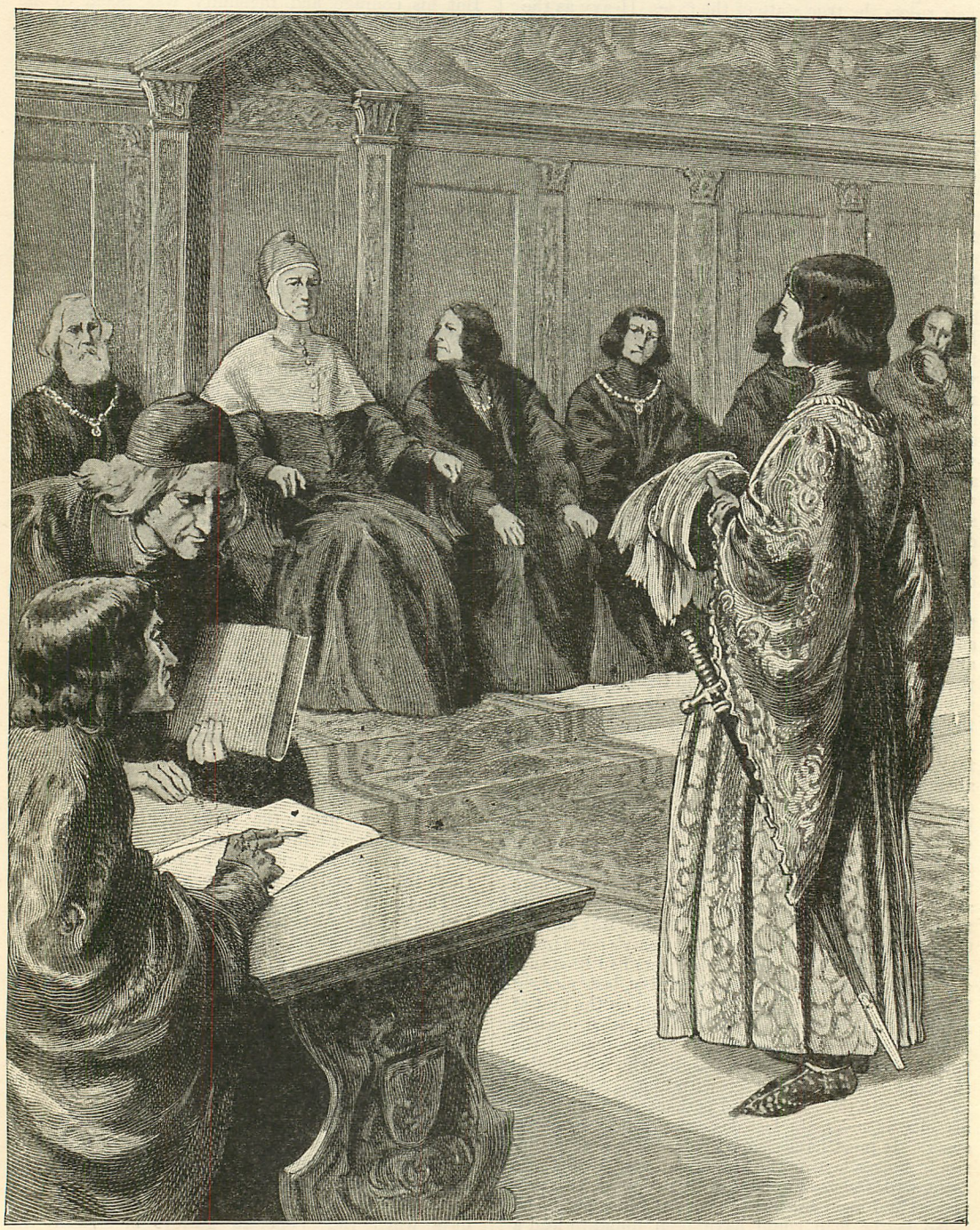
Among the Venetian troops were a band of mercenaries, hired soldiers of various nations, fighting only for their pay, and quite prepared, if that failed, to turn their arms against their employers. So turbulent did these dangerous allies become, that the Senate ordered Carlo, the only man able to manage them, to quit the sea for a time and take command of the land forces. A hard and ungrateful task it was, and once and again the gallant captain only stopped a mutiny by giving lavishly from his own fortune to his unruly troops, shaming the Senate, by his generosity, into sending him supplies of money for the same purpose. At last, when nearly half the year had gone in attack and counter-attack and the besieged garrison were almost at the end of their supplies, Carlo became aware of a plot, concocted between the Genoese in Chioggia and a party of malcontents among the mercenaries. A night sortie was to be made by the garrison, who were to be joined by the traitors in the camp, and, with their assistance, to cut their way through the ranks of the besieging army. The details of the plot were only discovered by the General a few hours before it was to be put into execution, and he knew that not a moment must be lost. As soon as the summer twilight had darkened into the short June night, he summoned to his tent the captains of the mercenaries, and, addressing them in stern and stirring words, told them of the treachery amongst their followers, and asked what fidelity the Republic might look for at their hands. We are grateful to the chronicler who tells us from whom the answer came. It was one William, an Englishman, who broke the anxious silence.

'Your words, General,' he said, 'have both rejoiced and grieved us. We rejoice in the confidence placed in us by the Republic in whose cause we fight, and we grieve that there should be among us men of such villainy as you say. But now we are yours, we are in your power; tell us the names of these traitors and we will show you our fidelity.'

The General's eloquent appeal and frank confidence had saved the Venetian cause. The ringleaders of the mutiny were seized at once, and Carlo, with his captains about him, roused the camp, by calling, in stentorian tones, on those who were faithful to Venice to rise and expel all traitors. The conspirators, thus brought to bay, fought desperately for a short time and then fled, the fugitives bearing the news of their failure to the Genoese. The garrison of Chioggia, finding the expected help from outside thus failing them, surrendered in despair, and the long siege was at an end.

As we linger to-day by the harbour of Chioggia, and watch the peaceful fishing-boats throwing the red and yellow reflections of their sails on the still water, our thoughts must needs fly backwards to the days when the Venetian galleys blockaded the Genoese for those weary months, and to the two great captains who toiled and spent themselves so ungrudgingly for Venice in the hour of her sorest need.

MARY H. DEBENHAM.



"He presented himself before the Senate."

"Momba took up his position close to me."

ROUND THE CAMP-FIRE.

I.—RALPH'S LITTLE NIGGER.

A PARTY of three was assembled in the flickering light of a slowly-expiring camp-fire. They were three young Englishmen, big-game hunting in South Central Africa; and they were discussing a suggestion made a few minutes before by one of their number.

'This plan of narrating in turns is a very good one,' said Ralph Denison; 'but it reminds me of "The Yeoman of the Guard," and of Jack Point's "I have a song to sing, oh!"——'

'My goodness, Ralph! you are not going to sing, are you?' interrupted Bobby Oakfield, seemingly much concerned; 'because, apart from what Vandeleur and I might suffer from the music, we might be attacked by all the beasts of the forest; they wouldn't stand it, you know, old chap.'

'Cheer up,' Ralph retorted; 'if the hyænas and things can stand seeing you about the place, they will stand anything; besides, my "song" isn't a song, but a jolly good story, with a moral, and therefore likely to do you good.'

'I always enjoy a nap,' began Bobby; but upon Ralph hastening to observe that the tale was too long to admit of arguments with mere boys, he only murmured, 'Long!—oh!' and lay down to sleep or listen, as Ralph began his yarn. The other two were to take turns at story-telling each night.

I was once right away up north-west, collecting antelope-heads, and putting in an occasional day or so after lions, when there were any signs of them in the neighbourhood. I was alone, with the exception of a Kaffir driver and of a Kaffir huntsman, a useful individual when it happened to be merely a matter of antelopes, but the most hopeless coward when lions or any beasts of prey were concerned.

I had penetrated into the country of a certain Bantu chief or petty king, of whom I had heard much from my Kaffir companions, and whose fame had reached me as far down-country as Bulawayo. This chief's name was Umbana, and it was said of him that he was a fine, intelligent fellow and a wise ruler, a good sportsman, and with the very acceptable quality of great admiration for the white races, and especially Englishmen, with whom he had several times come in contact.

So much did my Kaffirs tell me of this man that I became quite anxious to meet him, and felt half inclined to visit him at his kraal.

It so happened that the search for a herd of antelopes led us in a bee-line for King Umbana's royal kraal, and we found ourselves one morning so close to his headquarters that I decided to devote a day to paying this Bantu celebrity a call.

I therefore sent on my Kaffir *shikari* to prepare the way for my visit. A great and good Englishman, I bade him tell his Majesty, approached in order to offer him a gift and to pay his respects. The Englishman, he was to add, was a mighty hunter, and, in fact, a big swell all round, and——

'Those nigger chiefs will swallow anything,' interrupted Bobby, 'but——'

Bobby paused.

'Go on,' said Ralph, 'if you have anything to say.'

'But,' said Bobby, 'he can't have been taken in once he saw you!'

'Wait and see,' said Ralph, and went on with his tale.

My shikari brought back the gracious message that the King intended to have beef for dinner at noon, and would be charmed to greet the great English lord as his guest.

Needless to say that the great English lord accepted this invitation with pleasure, being fond of beef and also anxious to meet his Majesty.

The shikari conducted me to an enclosed kraal and to the hut-palace of the King, and I cannot honestly say that I was very deeply impressed by my first glance at his Bantu Majesty. Apparently Umbana's appetite had proved superior to his love of punctuality. He was seated upon the box-seat of a large ox-waggon, a big, athletic, strong-faced person of the Zulu type. He was attired in a pair of short-cut flannel trousers and a ragged old Norfolk coat. Upon his head was a straw hat with an English school ribbon. He had bare feet and ankles, no shirt, and in his hand was a huge bone of beef, under-done and dripping with fat gravy, from which he had gnawed about half the meat.

His Majesty greeted me with many kind words. He invited me, in broken English, to mount upon his high throne, and share with him his exalted seat and the meal upon which he had already embarked. A rib of beef was thrust into my hand by the attendant, and I enjoyed a messy but excellent meal, during which his Majesty and I conversed to the full extent of his knowledge of English, of which, I was surprised to find, he really knew a good deal. His liking for the English, I now learned, was due chiefly to his friendship with a certain Dick Gregson, a great hunter, who had lived and hunted with Umbana for a whole year, but who had, unfortunately, come to a sudden end while engaged in hunting elephants in this district. Gregson's death had, it appeared, been a matter of deep sorrow to the King, who had loved him well, and had been taught by him to respect and trust the nation to which poor Dick had belonged. Moreover, his death had put to an end certain projects which had existed, very near to Umbana's heart, with regard to his son and heir, young Momba, a lad as to whom I shall have a good deal to say presently. Gregson had, it appears, improved upon the King's liking for the English by advising him to send Momba to an English school for a few years; and had Gregson lived to return to the old country, undoubtedly the little Bantu prince would have accompanied him. The loss of this grand opportunity to make a Britisher of his son had preyed upon the father, and it is possible that his anxiety to show kindness to any Englishman who happened to visit his district was inspired more or less by the hope that one would appear, some day, who would be willing to do for the lad what poor Dick Gregson had promised, but failed to perform.

I suppose something about me pleased the King,

or else the considerations above mentioned acted upon his bump of hospitality, for his Majesty then and there gave me an invitation to stay as long as I pleased at the royal kraal. There was a nice hut, which he reserved specially for visitors, and into this I was presently ushered. In this little guest-house I found many indications of a previous British visitor—razors, brushes, and a comb, some clothes, and so forth—pathetic relics of Gregson.

And here I remained for a month or two, and made great friends with my royal host, in whom I discovered many excellent qualities, and with young Momba, who showed great appreciation for my virtues! After a certain little adventure their opinion of me grew still higher.

A family of lions took up their quarters in the neighbourhood, and began to prey upon the King's herds of cows and oxen, a matter which deeply offended his Majesty, whose wealth lay in the numbers of his horned treasures, and who little liked to see them laid low and eaten up one by one. The lions were, in this instance, a formidable family; the old paterfamilias had already killed a man, and seemed to have far less of the fear of humanity than is usually possessed by his kind.

King Umbana owned a rifle, the gift of Gregson, and was fond of sport; but, like most of his race, was a miserably bad shot, invariably pulling the trigger long before he had properly aimed at his mark. Momba had no weapon, except his set of assegais, but he was certainly quite equal to his father in the sporting instinct, and he was, moreover, altogether without fear. A big 'drive,' with the object of demolishing the lion family, was arranged. The tribe in general were to act as beaters; the King, with his rifle, was to occupy one of the points to which the beasts might probably be headed, while I chose a second likely position. Momba begged to be allowed to lurk, hidden, somewhere near me; he wished to see me shoot. I fancy he had more confidence in my prowess than in that of his father.

'Father shoot—*poff!*' he explained. 'Lion run away. Ralpi' (this was his version of Ralph) 'shoot—*poff!* Lion lie down—kick!'

So Momba took up his position close to me, well hidden in the scrub, and I was extremely glad afterwards that he did so.

(*Continued on page* 226.)

NOBLESSE OBLIGE.

A NOBLEMAN and his wife were riding home to their country seat. Soon after they started they were overtaken by a storm. The lady's maid was sitting on the box by the side of the coachman. The rain and wind soon became very fierce, and the maid was getting wet. At last the nobleman called to the coachman to stop the horses. When the carriage was brought to a standstill, he got out and took the maid's place on the box, and told her to take his place *inside*. Before he got home he was wet through, but he preferred this discomfort himself, rather than allow his servant to suffer in the same way.

NOBODY'S DOG.

(*Continued from page* 196.)

'I RECOLLECT one day after a skirmish' (continued the Vet.), 'when we were out attending to the wounded horses, there was a spaniel present. He belonged to the enemy, but all the same kept an eye on me as I went about doing my duty for the four-footed soldiers lying wounded on the field. I had not time to take much notice of him, nor did he make any fuss, though I wondered why he gazed so fixedly at me. But, when the very last horse had been seen to, the spaniel got up, and limping slowly to me, put in an appeal for himself by holding up one paw through which a bullet had passed. I attended to the wound, and left it comfortable, whereupon he went off on three legs to rejoin his own flag.'

'How foolish it seems to say that dogs have instinct but cannot reason, after that,' said the wandering musician.

'Foolish, indeed. I will tell you another true and even more remarkable story. When I was in India, a few years ago, the curate of a church near the town where we were stationed brought a small, lame dog to me. He had been in the hands of a quack, and required proper treatment. I found that the lameness was caused by a long piece of spear-grass which had become embedded in the leg. This I removed, and kept the dog for about a fortnight till the wound healed. He was then fetched home. After about ten days, I was surprised one morning at six o'clock to see the dog standing opposite my surgery window, holding the same limb off the ground, and looking up towards the house. I examined the leg, removed another bit of spear-grass, and kept him until he was well, then I sent him home. This time, being cured, he did not come back. What do you say—instinct or reason?

'It looks like reason. Yet even if the dog can reason for himself, it is necessary that, in some cases, his master should reason for him,' said the Vet. 'It is distressing, for instance, to see a dog dragging on a miserable existence, long after life has become a burden, because his master will not use his superior reason for the creature who is like a little, untaught child, entrusted to his care. When you brought this dear old dog to me here, Pat, what was your meaning? What do you wish me to do?'

'I can't bear to part with Laddie, sir; it would half kill me.'

'Then you mean that he shall go on suffering, to spare yourself the pang of parting with him. Is this the love of your dog, or love of yourself?'

'I can't do it, sir,' Pat fairly choked.

'Look here, Pat. My father was a doctor in this place, as perhaps you know, and we had just such another dear old dog as this. He and I were brought up together, like brothers, I may almost say. Well, as I reached early manhood, my father's head grew grey, and so did the muzzle of the poor old dog, till at last it was unkind to let him run after the horse when my father went round to his patients. So Donald was left behind to linger about the stables, alone, ghost-like, a shadow of his old, joyous self. His glad

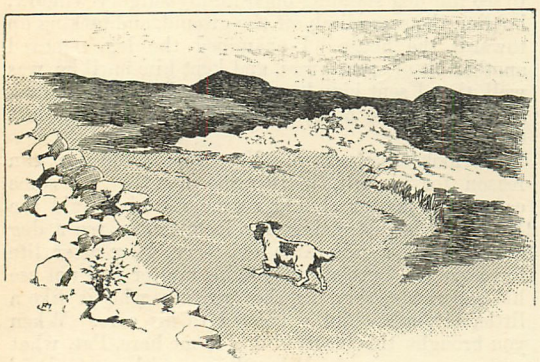
bark became a weak, hoarse wail, his limbs grew feeble, his eyes dim. He would raise his head and moan at the sound of my father's voice or the tread of his step, as if he longed for a sight of the face he could no longer watch. On sunny days, when he felt the warmth, Donald would painfully drag himself out to haunt the lane outside the stable-yard. He would turn his sightless eyes towards the strangers passing up and down, as if he waited and watched for Death, who comes to sorrowful man and sorrowful beast alike.

'I spoke to my father about the dog, begging him to give, or let some other skilled hand give, the merciful drug that should end Donald's dark day in sleep that knows no waking. He would be much upset at the suggestion that Donald suffered, but would always refuse.

'"I cannot bear to do it, or have it done. Say no more about it," he would answer. But, one morning among my father's letters was one in a strange hand. After reading it hastily, he passed it on to me. It ran thus:—

'"My dearest Master,—I am old and blind and lame; I can follow you no longer. The days are dark and long, the nights are restless and dreary. Take pity on me, and, by the love we have borne each other all these years, send me to sleep.—Your faithful old dog, DONALD."

'My father was wiping his eyes when next I looked at him. "Get it over before I come back," he said. "I will go the long round by the Crofts, and shall not be home till night-fall."



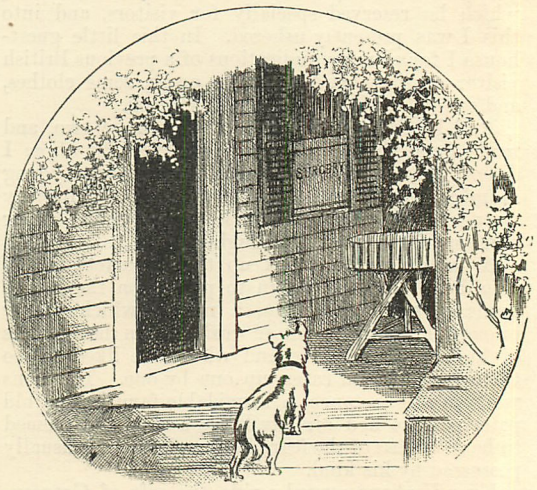
"He went off to rejoin his own flag."

'I shall never know who wrote the letter—some passing stranger, for it bore a London post-mark—but its message went straight home, and on whoever thus "opened his mouth for the dumb," the "blessing of him that was ready to perish" will come.'

'I see your meaning, sir,' said Pat, in sad tones. 'I am but a selfish man.'

'Will you trust Laddie to me?' said the Vet., laying his hand on that of the old man. 'Believe me it is the best and kindest plan.'

I was shut up in an outhouse then, and saw no more; but that village gossip, Stubby Brown, afterwards told me that the same night, when he was prowling about among the tree-trunks, he saw a simple little funeral take place under the spreading oak in front of the rude hut which was Pat's only



"I was surprised to see the dog opposite my surgery window."

home, and that the wanderer did not seem ashamed to let fall many a tear on the green sod covering his oldest and best friend.

(*Continued on page* 211.)

ARCHIE'S HEROISM.

'AT your books again, Archie? I tell you, it won't do, my lad; you cannot be burning the candle at both ends like this. You are looking quite worn out!'

The boy thus addressed lifted a pair of tired eyes, which bore out the truth of his mother's words.

Archie Grantham was a born student, although stern necessity had driven him forth to work at the Belmorna Mines, he being the sole support of a widowed mother. His father had been a schoolmaster, but as he had died in the lad's infancy, the burden of ways and means had fallen very heavily on Mrs. Grantham's shoulders.

At his mother's bidding the boy closed his books, and, after an affectionate good-night, went upstairs to his room.

'Is it always going to be like this?' he murmured to himself, as, flinging open his bedroom window, he looked out into the night, 'always the same dull old grind day after day? Oh, if *only* I could have my heart's desire, how different it would all be!'

As he grumbled thus to himself, there flitted through his mind some words he had chanced to read only a little while previously:—

'Do the work that's nearest,
Though 'tis dull at whiles;
Helping, when you meet them,
Lame dogs over stiles.'

"'I wouldn't go any further alone, if I were you.'"

Somehow the words came to him like a message, and a look of courage replaced the gloom on his young face. Before long he laid his head upon the pillow, and very soon was fast asleep. Early in the morning he was up and ready for his duties, for, despite his uncongenial tasks, Archie was no laggard where work was concerned. With a bright good-bye to his mother, he started off, little thinking of what would take place ere he saw her face again.

Towards mid-day the miners received a surprise visit from Sir John Wenley (one of the mine-owners) and his little daughter Gladys.

Archie was hard at work when he heard the clear childish voice echoing through one of the passages.

'Oh, how dark it is, Father!' she cried. 'I shan't be sorry when we see daylight again.'

'Well, you *would* come, Gladys,' was the answer, 'and now perhaps you are satisfied?'

'No, not yet. Now I am here, I want to see everything.'

'Wait till I've done my business then, and I will get some one to show us round,' said Sir John, who could deny his little daughter nothing upon which her heart was set.

Whilst her father was engaged in conversation with one of the senior men, Gladys decided she would explore a little on her own account. She made her way past the spot where Archie was at work, looking round about her with intense interest.

'I wouldn't go any further alone, Miss, if I were you,' said Archie; 'you might lose yourself.'

The child tossed her head. '*I* shan't lose myself,' she said. 'Besides, Father is close by.'

A minute or so after this, duty called Archie to a fresh spot in the direction of some old workings.

Suddenly there fell on his ears the sound of rushing waters. The water had got into the mine somewhere close at hand. Immediately he knew that a terrible danger threatened not only himself, but his comrades. He ran to the shaft as quickly as possible, warning the miners as he passed along by shouting, 'Water! water!'

It was just before this awful moment that Sir John realised his little daughter was no longer by his side. 'Gladys! Gladys!' he shouted, and there was anguish in his tones. But there was none to make reply, and, alas! the water was steadily making its way onwards.

'Get into the cage, quick, Sir John,' cried Gilson, the man in charge; 'we must clear out of this as soon as we can.'

'I'm not going till I have found my child,' was the hoarse, unsteady answer. 'Has any one seen her?' he cried.

'Yes, sir, I have,' said Archie, 'and I will save her if I can.'

With this the brave boy turned away, and rushed along the passage where he had last seen the little girl. It seemed an age before he found her, lonely and terrified, with the waters gradually rising higher and higher about her.

In the dim light Sir John was unable to trace or to follow Archie's footsteps. Archie and Gladys were alone! Higher and higher rose the dread tide, and, as the lad well realised, the work of return would be a very difficult matter.

He seized hold of the child without a word, and half led, half carried her through the waters.

'We shall be drowned! We shall be drowned!' sobbed poor Gladys. 'Oh, it is dreadful! What *shall* we do?'

Archie tried to reassure her as, with a prayer in his heart, he stumbled on, each step drawing him nearer the cage and safety. Presently the child grew faint with mingled fear and exhaustion; a minute later she was a dead weight in Archie's arms.

The waters had now reached nearly to his waist, and he began to feel his young strength failing him.

'Help! help!' he shouted, despair clutching at his heart.

'Aye, all right, lad,' came back the cheery answer; 'we are coming.'

A minute later a sturdy miner (who, with Sir John, was searching for the missing pair) stretched out his hands, and the dripping burden was removed from the boy's weakening grasp. In a little while both were in safety, and the peril which had threatened two young lives was a thing of the past.

* * * * *

Archie's heroism was not destined to go unrewarded, for on the following day he was summoned to Belmorna Hall (the residence of Sir John Wenley), there to receive the grateful thanks of the mine-owner and his little daughter.

The baronet's gratitude, however, found vent in something more than mere words. Hearing Archie's story, and of his ambition to be a scholar, he took upon himself the lad's education, at the same time making every provision for the widowed mother. And so it befell that, through bravely doing the work that was nearest, Archie Grantham won his heart's desire.

Years rolled on, and in due time—so well did the boy profit by his opportunities—he became a man of note in the world, and one, moreover, of whom the mining town of Belmorna was justly proud.

THE PEBBLE.

I CAST a pebble in a lake,
And soon there came to view
A circle that, as moments passed,
Wide and yet wider grew.
Outward it stretched, and on and on,
Larger and yet more large,
Until at last it seemed to reach
The lake's remotest marge.
Though wide and deep the waters flowed,
The pebble I had thrown
Still cast an influence o'er the lake,
Until the farthest zone.

And as that pebble was, I knew
My life must even be:
The world in which I live is like
A lake or open sea;
And all with whom I live and move
Must still my influence feel,
Hard hearts I may make soft by love,
By kindness I may heal.
And since on others I must act
Within my neighbourhood,
Oh, may the circles that I make
Be influences for good.

THE EVER-VICTORIOUS GENERAL.

AFTER the victory of Ramilies (in 1706), the Duke of Marlborough saw among the wounded French prisoners a soldier whose remarkable bravery he had previously noted in action; and going up to the man, the Duke complimented him on his prowess and said, 'If your master had many soldiers like you, he would be invincible.'

The soldier raised himself from his couch, and saluting the Duke he answered modestly, 'My master does not want soldiers like me, but generals like you.'

The soldier was not far wrong, for it can be said of the Duke of Marlborough, as of few other generals, that 'he never fought a battle which he did not win, and never besieged a place which he did not take.'

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 195.)

THE three fugitives ran as long as they conveniently could. The Eagle was in good condition, and could have run for miles, but his shoulder was painful; so that he was glad when Paul, who was not in training, and Peter, who had passed middle age, slowed off and gradually came to a stop.

'Now that we have halted,' said the Eagle, 'I think I will get one of you to bandage my shoulder for me.'

The wound was a slight one. One of the pellets had torn its way along the edge of the flesh of the upper arm near the shoulder, making a little groove, and passing out through the coat. Paul tended it carefully, pronouncing it a mere scratch, which, indeed, it was.

'We must wash it,' he said. 'Melt some snow, Peter, in the little kettle.'

Peter made a small fire of twigs and melted some snow. Paul bade him wash the wound.

As the old man proceeded to carry out this order, Paul observed him start violently.

'What, are you one of those who can't stand the sight of blood?' he asked, laughing. 'Give me the rag; I will do it.'

Paul took the rag and washed the wound.

'What is the scar you have on your shoulder, Eagle?' he asked, suddenly.

'Can't say,' said the Eagle. 'I have always had it, and that's all I know about it.'

'Looks as if a dog had bitten you at some time or other. There's a scar on each side of the arm near the shoulder—look, Peter!'

'I saw it,' said Peter, without glancing in the direction indicated. 'The same idea occurred to me. Perhaps a dog bit him when a small child.'

'If so, I remember nothing of it,' the Eagle laughed. 'It does not matter, anyway. Thanks, Paul; now I feel far more comfortable. We had better be pushing along, hadn't we?'

The 'retreat' was now continued, the party walking quickly along a by-road which led into forest country, hoping thus to put their pursuers off the track (for pursued they were certain to be), and so to gain time. Paul and the Eagle chatted together, but old Peter was very silent. When rallied by the others upon his dulness, he declared that he had no particular reason for it, except that the little affair at the village had been somewhat more serious than the young Count seemed to think.

'We have lost touch of the Chain of Friends of the Unfortunate,' he said, 'and must depend now on our own exertions to avoid those who are already after us.'

'Well, they haven't found us,' Paul laughed; 'and when they do, if the roubles do not get rid of them, a shot or two may send them scuttling home as it did the Starost and his friends.'

'The soldiers have rifles,' said Peter.

'A rouble goes much further than a bullet,' remarked the Eagle.

'And much faster in some ways,' added Paul, laughing.

Meanwhile the Starost held consultation with his braves. The upshot of the conference was that one man was sent to summon the Cossacks who had lately passed through the village in search of the fugitives, while a second was dispatched two miles eastward in order to summon a peasant who possessed a pair of Borzoi hounds trained to follow upon the scent of human beings.

The soldiers and the dogs appeared at about the same time, the Cossacks angry because it was obvious that they had over-run the fugitives; that is, they must somehow have missed them either on the road or at some village—unless, indeed, they had slept or passed the night in the forest, which was scarcely likely in the cold weather.

'Why didn't you catch the rascals and detain them till we came?' asked the sergeant.

'You will know all that when you see them,' replied the Starost. 'They are armed to the teeth with revolvers, rifles, and Heaven knows what. The lawless villains fired in our faces; it is a mercy we are alive to tell the tale.'

'I don't believe it,' said the sergeant. 'How should escaped convicts be armed?'

'Ah! how? How did they escape without accomplices? Why should not the same accomplices provide firearms?'

'Then there must be money,' remarked the sergeant, becoming thoughtful.

Presently a start was made. The two Borzois were taken to the tumble-down shed from which Paul and his companions had been ejected.

'We examined this place,' said the sergeant; 'there was no one there.'

'They came after your visit,' explained the Starost. 'You could not have missed seeing them. I found them here.'

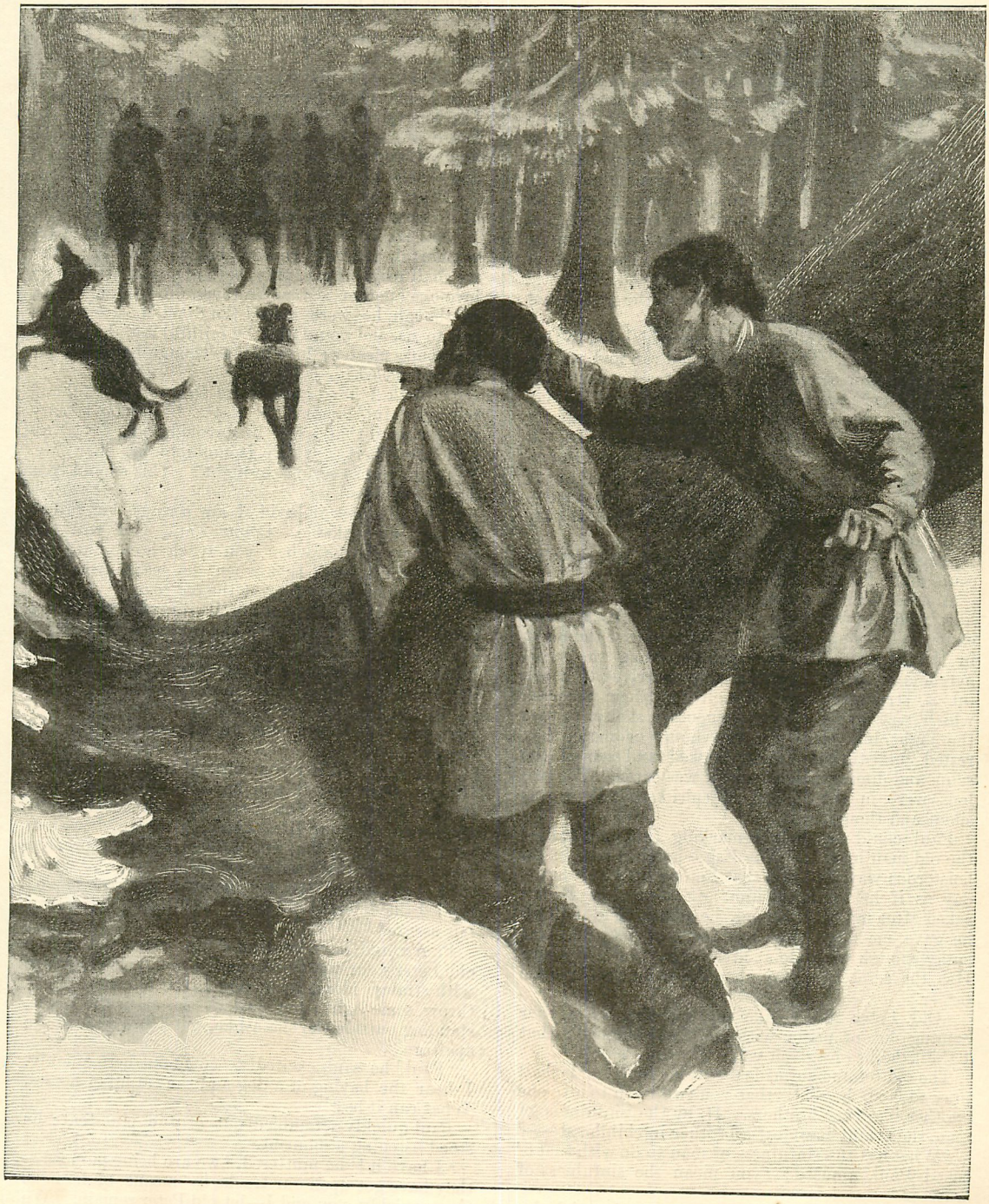
'Then any fool could have seen them, certainly,' retorted the sergeant rudely.

Meanwhile the dogs took up the scent, and followed it easily as far as the high road; here, however, they seemed at fault, though they careered in front of the Cossacks as though confident of striking the trail presently. Their confidence in themselves was soon rewarded, for at the by-road along which the fugitives had made their way into the forest both hounds darted forward with a pleased whine, and soon the Cossack ponies were at a trot, following upon a hot scent.

Through the forest the hounds pressed forward with scarcely a check; the miles followed one another until four or five had been passed. Suddenly dogs, men, and horses were startled by the sound of two pistol or rifle-shots from somewhere close at hand. One hound uttered a cry, rolled over, and stiffened out—dead. Another bullet crashed through the fir-branches overhead.

(*Continued on page* 210.)

"The hounds pressed forward with scarcely a check."



"Bang went both revolvers."

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 207.)

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE fact that the half-dozen Cossacks should have been startled by so unexpected a thing as the sudden slaying of a dog, accompanied by the whistle of several bullets overhead, need not brand them as cowards. It was a startling thing to happen in mid-forest, and any man or body of men might have been brought up suddenly in their tracks by such an event. The six Cossacks, however, turned tail and galloped away to a distance of one hundred yards, where they halted to take counsel. The result of their conference was a volley of rifle-bullets aimed at the spot, or near the spot, whence the pistol-shot seemed to have been fired.

It is time to explain the causes which led to that surprising event. Our fugitives had run and walked through the forest until they were tired. They had chosen every by-path that they happened to encounter, in order to render it the more difficult for possible pursuers to follow them with success. It had not occurred to them that dogs might be employed in the pursuit, or, doubtless, they would have acted differently. As things turned out, Paul—seeing that old Peter was almost at his last gasp with fatigue—called a halt.

'Light a fire, Peter,' he said, 'and boil up some soup, while Mark and I make a shalashka.'

A shalashka is a conical, tent-shaped shelter or hut, made of saplings or branches. It is used extensively by sportsmen who wish to pass the night in the forest. The two youths, using the small hatchets which both carried, soon contrived to knock up a structure large enough for their purpose, which was to have some temporary shelter to pass the night in. Here, for two hours or more, they rested undisturbed; Peter cooked and served the soup, and dinner, much needed, was eaten. The two lads were in the highest of spirits, but Peter was silent and thoughtful.

Paul could not help remarking this, and rallied the old man upon it. The Eagle laughed too, in his boisterous way, and said that Peter stared at him to-day as if he would eat him. 'Several times he has asked after my little wound,' he added, 'and I think he gave me more than my share of soup; he was sulky enough with me at first—what is it, old man? Has the scratch on my shoulder made you love me better?'

'Old Peter didn't like my insisting upon your coming out of prison with me,' Paul laughed; 'but I think he has forgiven you now—eh, Peter?'

The old huntsman made a curious reply. 'I shall pray to God,' he said, 'that you two learn to love one another like very brothers. If, by the sinfulness of man, the Count Paul lost a brother in childhood——'

'What has the sinfulness of man to do with that?' asked Paul, amused; 'you mean the sinfulness of wolves.'

'Alas! men are sometimes more greedy, wickeder even than wolves!' exclaimed the old man; 'may Heaven forgive all such! The Lord gave and the Lord took away; that which was taken from the Countess in sorrow and mourning may yet be returned to her in rejoicing—who can tell?'

'What *do* you mean, Peter?' asked the Count, somewhat stirred by his manner, which was strange and uncanny.

'I shall not be there to see,' continued the old man, 'for I shall never return to Petersburg—that I have felt long since; but there shall be rejoicing in the house of the Countess, my beloved mistress, for the young Count shall bring back a brother for himself and for the Countess a son.'

'Peter, you are over-tired,' said Paul, anxiously. 'Lie down and rest; you are talking nonsense.'

'No, no, it is not nonsense; the ways of God are wonderful, indeed; we sow, but we know not what we shall reap. Pray, pray, both of you, that you may love one another as very brothers. Love him, Paul, as though he were indeed the little Mark who was lost to us, and you, Oriol, be faithful and devoted to my young master; love him as though he were your brother indeed.'

'I think I have good cause to love him well and to be grateful,' laughed the Eagle. 'You may be easy in your mind that I will be devoted enough; I owe him my liberty, which is more to me than life. Why are you so serious to-night? This should be a day of gladness.'

'Ah! gladness indeed! I am serious, but full of gladness unspeakable. Count Paul, you will tell my dear mistress when you reach home that old Peter did his best; that when she learns what she must learn, she may forgive the old man.'

'Peter, old friend, you are ill, or you would not speak thus,' said Paul. 'What is the matter?'

But Peter would not reveal what was upon his mind, only repeating that the Countess would one day learn something which should rejoice her heart.

'In the hour of her rejoicing,' he said, 'promise that you will entreat her to forgive one who has deeply sinned.'

'You shall tell her yourself, old friend,' said Paul. 'Come, cheer up; if you have something on your mind, forget it. You have so well served your employers all your life, which, after all, has been your chief duty, that you will certainly be forgiven many sins for this good service alone.'

'I shall never see my beloved mistress again,' replied the dejected old man. 'Of that I have long felt assured.'

Paul would have continued this conversation, for old Peter's curious mood puzzled him, and filled him with strange ideas, upon which the old man might throw some light; but just at this crisis the Eagle, standing outside the shalashka, put his head in at the aperture.

'Paul,' he said, excitedly, 'come out here quickly. I hear the baying of a dog and the tramp of horses. What can it be?'

Paul quickly scrambled out of the pine-tent; he stood listening a moment.

'I have it!' he muttered, 'we are being pursued—they have got upon our tracks by means of hounds. Come quickly, you and I—let old Peter remain. We will ambush them from a corner of the path—they must not see the shalashka—I have a plan in my head.'

Paul explained the situation to old Peter in a few words. 'Pack the knapsacks and have all ready,' he said; 'we shall be back in a moment.'

Then the two youths ran, revolvers in hand, to a spot where a bend in the road concealed the shalashka from view. Here they stood hidden behind a fallen pine. 'Fire at the dogs,' whispered Paul; 'without them the men would never have found us!'

The clatter of the Cossacks' ponies upon the hard-beaten snow-track sounded close at hand; occasionally a dog gave tongue, and his bay was answered by a yelp from his companion. Suddenly the whole cavalcade appeared in view—six Cossacks mounted, and two Borzoi hounds.

'Fire together,' whispered Paul, 'aim carefully. You take the right-hand dog—I the left.'

Bang went both revolvers simultaneously, and the report caused panic among the Cossack party, dogs, ponies and all, as we have already seen.

(*Continued on page* 222.)

PUZZLERS FOR WISE HEADS.

7.—Doublets.

Changing one letter at a time, in as few steps as possible, make

1. Eye into Arm.
2. Two ,, Six.
3. Hand ,, Foot.
4. 'Bus ,, Cab.
5. Cold ,, Heat.

R. M. B.

[*Answers on page* 250.]

Answer to Puzzle on Page 179.

6.—M A S S
A G I O
S I L L
S O L D I E R
I D L E
E L S E
R E E F

PLAGUE STONES.

TRAVELLERS on English roads here and there come upon the remains of old stone crosses, generally at no great distance from some village or town. In many instances the cross itself has disappeared, leaving only its pedestal with the small cavity in the top for the shaft of the cross. At periods when terrible epidemics have raged in our country towns, these stones have been used by the sufferers when seeking to communicate with those free from the disease. The practice was as follows: The market people placed near the stone their different wares, and retired to a distance, while those from the afflicted town came out and put on the stone money to the value of what they wished to take. Sometimes this money was dropped into the cavity, that the rain-water generally lying there might clean it. On returning to their homes, the market folk came again and took the payment left for them. Hence these remains of older monuments have acquired the name of plague stones.

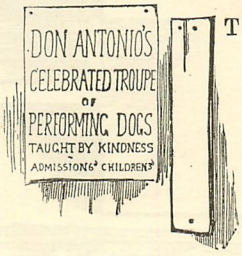
RATS ON GUARD.

TWO ingenious burglars in an American jail found their cells infested with rats. They did not object to this, for they devised a means by which their presence could be turned to good account, by making them act as sentinels. They began operations for sawing their way out of the jail, and on each occasion, before beginning work, they scattered bread-crumbs close to their cell doors. When the rasping noise attracted the attention of the watchman, the slight noise of his approach caused the rats to patter off, so that the burglars stopped sawing, and the watchman failed to find out where the sound came from.

NOBODY'S DOG.

(*Continued from page* 204.)

CHAPTER VIII.



IT was some days before I could use my crushed paw easily, and the first use I made of it was to start off again in search of my dear master, Luke. It was not ingratitude towards my kind Doctor, but a yearning for Luke which took me away.

I was guided by that inward feeling, to which many lowly creatures trust, which always guides them faithfully, and is called the 'homing instinct.' After a run of several hours, I was thankful to find myself turning into the familiar road along which Luke had carried me home.

I quickened my pace. I hardly paused, except to take one drink from a wayside pool, till I came in sight of the cottage where once we had all been happy together. I made my way close up to it in mingled hope and fear.

The little gate was padlocked. I pricked my ears to listen for Rosie's prattle—all was still. The door was shut, all the village seemed strangely quiet, too. I had just raised my nose aloft to give vent to my feelings in a doleful howl when whom should I see coming up, cool as a cucumber, but Stubby Brown. I was glad to see him, and I believe he was happy to meet me too, for a mild look came into his eyes, though he was never a gushing dog.

'How do you do?' said Stubby, in an off-hand tone. 'How have you got on since last we met? Do you like being a lost dog? There are worse things than being lost. Sometimes it is a worse matter to be *found*. Bow-wow! Do you notice a lack of clearness in my voice? I have barked myself hoarse, and so would you, if you had been here just now.

'A troupe of performing dogs has been through the village. I saw with my own eyes a little dog riding on the back of a big dog, wearing a cap on his

head. Every man, woman, and child, not tied up at home, is gone after them. They are on the way to see the show at a barn behind the "Moon and Stars" Inn, over away yonder. I stopped behind to get my dinner from Mother Brown first, and if you are a wise dog, you will take a snack too—I'll go shares! After that we will go on to the "Moon and Stars." I generally step over to the "Moon and Stars" on fair-days; there's generally a tripe supper, or something agreeable, going on of a night. If one only gets a plate to lick, it is better than nothing. What do you say?'

'I don't think I ought to go without my master,' I was beginning, when Stubby interrupted, 'If you are afraid, say so. But, as to going without a master, you'll have to get over that. Look here! You don't think of starving at Luke Bramble's door for ever, do you? Who knows whether he and Martha and the children ever mean to come back at all? Come, you'd better run in with me! I can smell the dinner now, I think!'

"Mother Brown had a kind heart."

What else could I do? I was very hungry, I was alone in the world, and masterless. There was nobody but Stubby to advise me, and he was older and wiser than I, so I obeyed him. Mother Brown had a kind heart for all the unfortunate, and she gave me a plateful of potatoes and scraps.

(*Continued on page* 218.)

"'No man shall lay a finger on thee,' said Prince Rupert."

HEROINES OF THE CIVIL WAR.

VI.—AT THE MERCY OF PRINCE RUPERT.

IT was a quiet August Sunday morning in the year 1642, and the inhabitants at Caldecote Manor, in Warwickshire, were preparing to assemble in the cool flagged hall for the usual Sunday morning's service, which, in the troubled days of the Civil War, was often held at home.

The master of the house, William Purefoy,

member of Parliament for Warwickshire, was not at home. He was fighting with the Parliamentary troops, so his place had to be taken by his son-in-law, John Abbot, who chanced to be staying at Caldecote for a few weeks with his young wife.

Part of the small congregation had already assembled. John Abbot had seated himself at the head of the long table which stood in the middle of the hall, and was turning over the leaves of a big book of sermons, selecting one suitable for the day. On his right hand sat his mother-in-law, Mrs. Purefoy, a handsome middle-aged lady, while on his left were his wife and her sister, Dorothy. At the lower end of the table sat three maid-servants, dressed soberly in black, with white mob-caps on their heads, and white kerchiefs crossed demurely on their breasts.

No sound was to be heard save the rustling of the leaves of the sermon-book. At last John Abbot selected a sermon, and, putting in a piece of paper to mark the place, he shut the book, and, leaning back in his chair, glanced impatiently towards the door. Evidently he was waiting for some one. Mrs. Purefoy kept three maid-servants, and they had not yet put in an appearance.

No one spoke until the old eight-day clock in the corner chimed eleven; then Mrs. Purefoy broke the silence.

'Where are William and Ralph and Job, Keziah?' she asked, looking at the oldest of the maid-servants. '"Tis not their custom to be late for worship.'

'May it please thee, Madam, but Ralph and Job went into the courtyard to see that all the gates be bolted,' answered Keziah, meekly. 'And as for William, he took a turn in the upper meadow, from whence one can view the land, for when old Matthew, the smith, passed the stables scarce half an hour ago, he said that a rumour had arisen that Prince Rupert was in the neighbourhood with a considerable body of soldiers, and William thought——'

The sound of hob-nailed shoes clattering across the paved courtyard interrupted Keziah's measured words, and the next moment the door of the hall was abruptly thrown open by a stout countryman, who was followed by two younger lads.

'If it please thee, Madam,' he gasped, for he had been running and was sadly out of breath, 'there is a great troop of soldiers riding up by the riverside, led by an officer who is so richly dressed that I fear 'tis Prince Rupert himself. They be coming direct towards the house, Madam.'

'Prince Rupert himself!' echoed young Mrs. Abbot, her pretty pink cheeks growing pale. 'Then are we undone, for they say he is merciless, and will allow no quarter. If he wishes to take possession of the house, thou wilt not oppose him, Mother? It would be madness to do so.'

'Certainly I will oppose him,' said Mrs. Purefoy, calmly. 'I will never give up my husband's possessions to a handful of Cavaliers. John, I trust that thou wilt help me; we will make the best defence we can, and the outcome of it is in the hands of the Lord.'

John Abbot nodded. He was a man of few words, but none the less brave for that.

'There are some old muskets in the attic, are there not?' he asked. 'Methinks I remember that William used one of them to keep the crows from the standing corn last autumn. Hush, Lucy, throw thy fears to the winds, and come thou with Dorothy and help me to find them and put them in order while the men see to the bolts and bars.'

As was feared, the leader of the troop of soldiers turned out to be the King's nephew, Prince Rupert, who had proved himself to be such a skilful and stern soldier that his enemies dreaded him. He demanded that the Manor House should be given up to him at once, and when, to his surprise, he was met by a firm refusal, he lost no time in surrounding it and ordering his men to open fire.

He was not prepared, however, for the answering fire that came promptly from the upper windows, causing one or two of his men to fall forward on their faces on the green grass.

'It looks as if the house were garrisoned,' he said in surprise to one of his captains. 'We were told that there was no one in it save its owner's wife and a handful of servants. The information must have been false. To judge by the firing there must be at least a dozen soldiers inside, but our force is so strong they cannot long withstand us.'

For more than an hour the unequal conflict raged. Outside there were five hundred soldiers keeping up a continuous fire. Inside there were four men and six women and fourteen old muskets.

But the four men shot straight and true, and the six women crouched on the floor, where stray bullets could not reach them, and loaded the muskets one after another with a speed that was truly marvellous, handing up the loaded guns and receiving back the empty ones in quick succession.

No wonder that Prince Rupert was deceived as to their number, and no wonder that his patience failed him when, at the end of the hour, he had lost three captains and fifteen men, and was no nearer taking the Manor House than he had been at the beginning of it.

It was evident the house could not be taken by storm, but he had still another weapon.

'Set fire to the barns and outhouses,' he cried at last. 'If we cannot batter down their walls, we will smoke them out of their den.'

The order was obeyed, and soon great tongues of flame were rising from the well-filled haysheds and the solid barns and outhouses which formed three sides of the courtyard.

Then, for the first time, consternation filled the hearts of the gallant defenders. If the fire were allowed to spread, nothing could save the Manor House, and, unless they surrendered, the fire would certainly be allowed to spread.

With white faces John Abbot and his three companions glanced at one another. Their lives were doomed; they knew that well enough. With the eighteen dead bodies lying out yonder on the grass, they need expect no quarter; but it was not for themselves they feared. What of the women? Could Prince Rupert be expected to show mercy to them?

Mrs. Purefoy read their thoughts, but she showed no sign of dismay. 'Stop firing, John,' she said calmly, 'and unbar the door. I am going out to treat with Prince Rupert.'

Amazed at her courage, but full of fears for her safety, John Abbot tried to dissuade her.

'"Tis madness to risk it,' he said. '"Tis not as if the Prince were an Englishman. He is a foreigner, and folk say he hath little pity for women and children. Better to die together here than to fall into his hands.'

But brave Mrs. Purefoy was firm. 'He hath a mother of his own,' she said. 'Surely for her sake he will reverence my grey hairs.'

A few moments afterwards, Prince Rupert, standing watching the flames doing their deadly work, was amazed to see a grey-haired lady issue from the dense smoke that hung over the courtyard. She came hurrying across the strip of grass in front of the burning buildings, and flung herself at his feet.

'Mercy, your Highness, mercy!' she cried, 'as hereafter thou wouldst crave mercy of Heaven.'

In spite of his anger at the stubbornness of the defence and the loss of his men, the Prince was moved. Perhaps, as Mrs. Purefoy had said, a vision of his own mother came before his mind.

'I grant it, Madam,' he said gently, raising the kneeling suppliant. 'No man shall lay a finger on thee.'

'But 'tis for my household as well as for myself,' went on Mrs. Purefoy. 'In the name of the God of mercy, I demand their lives as well as my own.'

'That will I grant thee also, Madam,' answered the Prince. 'Only I cannot extend my clemency to the soldiers—they must suffer for their resistance.'

A strange smile passed over Mrs. Purefoy's face. 'So be it, your Highness,' she said. 'If thou canst find one soldier in my house, thou art at liberty to shoot him at once. I crave no mercy for him.'

Prince Rupert stared. 'Dost mean to tell me,' he asked, 'that thou hadst no soldiers to help thee? Then who kept up such a deadly fire?'

'My son-in-law and my three men-servants,' answered the brave woman proudly, 'and I and my daughters and the serving-maidens loaded the muskets.'

That night Prince Rupert and his men rode on, and Caldecote Manor House was left untouched. There had been much grumbling among the soldiers when they had been told to set to work to put out the fire and were forbidden to enter the house, for they had had hopes of plunder, but the Prince's orders were strict.

'"Twas the bravest defence I have ever heard of,' he said, 'and what the lady guarded so well, that shall she keep entire.'

THE VIOLET.

THERE is a tender little flower
That grows in woodland dell;
It hangs its head within its bower,
And children love it well.

Remote from public view it grows,
And spreads its sweetness round;
Nor flaunts its charms like the proud rose,
But bends beside the ground.

The violet is this lovely flower,
And though it has no speech,
Yet, growing lowly, hour by hour,
This lesson sweet doth teach:

That childhood's simple, lowly grace
Is ever fair to see;
Nor can earth lovelier thing possess
Than sweet humility.

ANIMAL FASHIONS.

MUCH interesting information may often be obtained by studying the colours of various animals. Any one who does this will soon discover that a great many animals have colours which resemble the grass, the ground, the foliage, or the other surroundings in which they live. Let us take as an illustration of this, three animals which usually inhabit countries which are colder than ours. These are the Ptarmigan, the Mountain Hare, and the Arctic Fox. Let us look at each of them in turn in the summer-time, when the grass, the heather, and the shrubs are decked in all their colours.

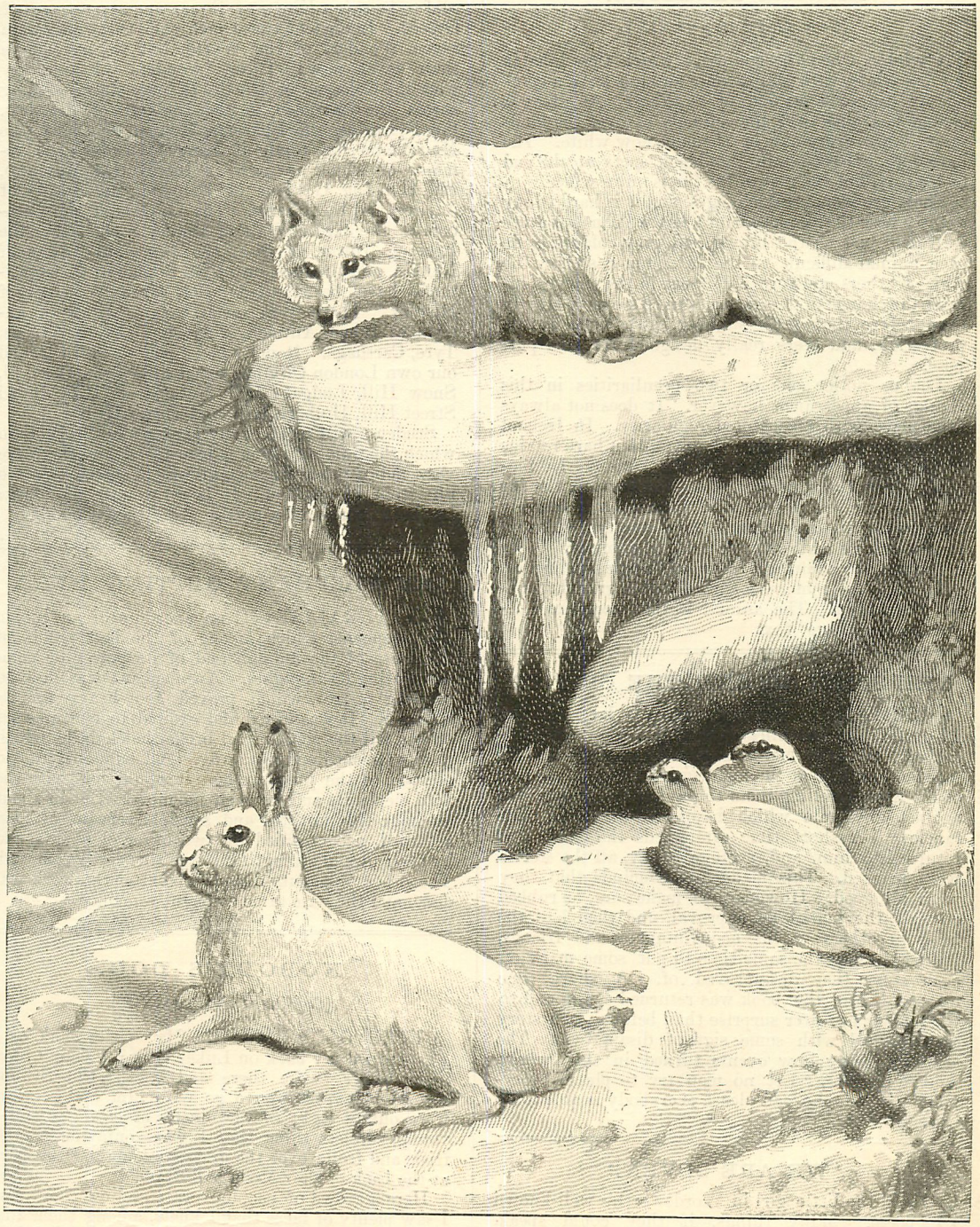
The ptarmigan is to be found in the northern parts of Europe and America, where it lives among the rocks and the long, coarse grass upon the mountain-sides. Its colour is a sort of speckled brown, which very much resembles the grey rocks and the brown grass among which it makes its nest of twigs and grass. Its eggs are of a reddish colour, speckled with brown, and they, too, are very difficult to detect.

The mountain hare is very similar to our common hare, but, like the ptarmigan, it is usually an inhabitant of colder countries. It is found, however, in Scotland and Ireland, and also on the high mountains of the Alps, the Pyrenees, and the Caucasus. It is sometimes called the Alpine hare, and in Scotland the blue hare. It is rather smaller than the common hare, and has a rounder head and shorter ears. Its legs, too, are not so long, and its little tail is quite stumpy. Its colour is a light, tawny grey, approaching that of a rabbit, which, as we know, is very difficult to distinguish when it sits motionless on the grass or the bare ground. One very noticeable peculiarity of the mountain hare is that the tips of its ears are quite black.

The Arctic fox, as we may judge by its name, is an inhabitant of Arctic countries, though it may be found as far south as the middle of Norway and Sweden in Europe, and the southern end of the Hudson's Bay in North America. It differs from our English fox in several points, but it very much resembles it in colour. Its ears and its muzzle are shorter than those of our fox, and near the hinder part of its head it has a kind of ruff of longer hairs. It has hair, too, on the soles of its feet, and this is of great assistance when it wishes to walk upon the ice. In America the Arctic foxes often migrate in autumn and winter. The animals live in colonies of twenty or thirty families each; they prey upon birds and lemmings, the latter an animal very much resembling a rat, and they are also very fond of eggs.

(*Concluded on page* 218.)

Ptarmigan, Mountain Hare, and Arctic Fox in Summer Dress.



Ptarmigan, Mountain Hare, and Arctic Fox in Winter Dress.

ANIMAL FASHIONS.

(*Concluded from page* 215.)

IN winter, when the countries which they inhabit are white with snow, these animals have a completely different fashion of clothing. As great a change has come over the animals as over the landscape, since every one of them is now white. The hare does, indeed, retain the black spots at the end of his ears, but the rest of his fur is quite white.

These are wonderful changes, and it is hard to say exactly how they come about; but we can see quite well that just as the brown and grey colours made each animal difficult to see in summer, so now the white feathers and furs hide them in the snow. Indeed, the change of dress enables us to see more clearly than before that their summer coats were a true protection, and were really designed for this purpose.

Let us notice one or two peculiarities in this change of appearance, however. It does not always take place with mechanical regularity. In Ireland and the south of Sweden, the mountain hare retains his summer coat all through the winter. In Iceland, where the winters are not very severe, the fur of the Arctic fox is greyer in summer, and scarcely changes at all in winter. Occasionally an Arctic fox retains its white winter coat in summer. Very often, too, the summer coat is only partially changed, as it were, and remains a sort of leaden grey throughout the winter. The animal is then sometimes described as a 'blue' fox.

THE SCHOLAR AND THE CRITICS.

A CERTAIN scholar once wrote a large volume of fables and allegories with a view to publication. When he had finished the compilation to his satisfaction, he lent the manuscript book to a number of his friends, telling them to put a mark of approval against any tale which happened to strike their fancies. A short time afterwards the book was returned to him, and, strange to say, all the stories were marked. This made him conclude that they were all good. However, to make sure, he rubbed out all the marks of approval, and then lent the book to others of his acquaintances and friends, telling them at the same time to put some mark on each story they disapproved of. A short time elapsed before the book was returned again, and to the scholar's greater surprise than before, each story was marked with some sign of disapproval. The scholar, seeing how events turned in this world, said to himself, 'Let no man try to please everybody, for he who can please everybody is able to do impossibilities.'

'WE ARE SEVEN.'

SO said the little girl in Wordsworth's well-known poem. Many things, if they could speak, might make the same answer—the days of the week, for example, the notes of the musical scale, the colours of the rainbow. The Germans say that 'All good things are three'; but seven, also, is certainly a remarkable and distinguished number. There were said to be seven Kings of Rome, and seven Sages of Greece. In ancient times men said that there were seven Wonders of the World, but we have more than seven now! Those 'wonders' of antiquity were the Colossus of Rhodes (a huge statue striding across the entrance to the harbour of Rhodes), the Pyramids, the Ephesian Temple of Diana, the Mausoleum (or tomb of King Mausolus, the remains of which are now in the British Museum), the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, the Statue of Jupiter, and the Pharos. The Colosseum, the Catacombs, the Great Wall of China, Stonehenge, the Leaning Tower of Pisa, the Porcelain Tower of Nankin, and the Mosque of St. Sophia at Constantinople have been called 'the seven Wonders of History.' There were seven famous cities of antiquity: Rome, Antioch, Nineveh, Babylon, Athens, Tyre, Carthage. Rome stood upon seven hills, and our own London City has seven hills also: Cornhill, Snow Hill, Ludgate Hill, Fish Street Hill, Bread Street Hill, Holborn Hill, and Tower Hill.

Students will recall many passages in the Bible in which the number seven is mentioned, and there are very many other famous groups of seven, far too numerous to mention. It is no wonder that *seven* has been considered a mystic and a sacred number.

AN ELEPHANT GETTING HELP.

A NATURALIST tells an anecdote of an Indian elephant, which is one of the best proofs of the sense of the animal, and of its power of communicating its thoughts. An elephant was ordered to drag a tree which proved too heavy for its strength. It was urged and excited to continue its efforts, till the poor animal broke the chain by which it was fastened and ran away. All supposed it had escaped to the jungle, where it would mix with the wild elephants and be seen no more. But in about an hour this faithful and sensible servant of man returned, accompanied by two other elephants, and by their united strength the tree was easily removed. The other elephants disappeared after the work was done, and the wise tame elephant remained.

NOBODY'S DOG.

(*Continued from page* 212.)

AFTER this we started. My spirits sank as I turned my back on Luke's door; I should have liked better to lie there and wait. But Stubby seemed to expect me to go with him, and soon we were out of sight of the cluster of cottages, and—young, careless thing that I was—enjoying a good frisk and frolic over the grass surrounding the barn at the back of the 'Moon and Stars.'

Here a crowd of people were standing about, and I saw plenty of faces that I knew, among them that of old Daddy Pinch, an aged man who lived in a neat little cottage by the road, half buried in the wood, with an austere old terrier called Bristles. Piping Pat was there too.

From within the barn came a great noise of yelping and snarling and barking, with the occasional crack of a whip and a man's loud, scolding voice, as if many dogs were fighting, or in trouble of some kind. All the dogs outside, including Stubby and myself, took up the cry; we could not help it.

'What a hubbub!' said a countryman standing by to a girl at his side. 'What with the curs inside and outside, a man can't hear himself speak.'

The girl, who had a pretty face, made no answer, but slowly read aloud some words which were stuck up in large white letters on a red ground over the barn door:—

'DON ANTONIO'S

CELEBRATED TROUPE OF PERFORMING DOGS,

TAUGHT BY KINDNESS.

Admission 6d. Children Half-price.'

'Get behind the woman's petticoats,' whispered Stubby to me. 'She has the right sort of face and voice, and won't be angry. Let us pretend to belong to her without her knowing it. See these dogs again I must and will. I want to know whether their clothes grow on to them or not.'

After a good deal of elbowing and trampling, amid which we contrived to get in unnoticed as soon as the doors were thrown open, Stubby and I, keeping close to the girl, stowed ourselves away under the chairs so as to peep out. I could see nothing, and crouched, shaking with fright at the strange noises.

'Trumpets, drums, and dogs playing on a tambourine,' explained Stubby, who could see as well as hear.

'Look, Bill,' said the girl beneath whose chair I was hidden, 'is that smiling gentleman Don Antonio? Hark! What does he say?'

'He says that to prove what kindness will do, he is about to put the dogs through their performance, all taught by love and gentleness,' answered Bill. 'He assures us that the dogs enjoy it as much as we shall do.'

The girl was silent.

For about a moment the dogs danced round in a circle to the tune, 'Slap, bang! here we are again! What jolly dogs are we!' Next came the chorus, 'Bow-wow-wow!' in which the dogs were supposed to join with screams of joy, 'Bow-wow-wow! what jolly dogs are we!' It was supposed to end in cries of delight, but surely a more miserable wail never rose from this earth; so, at least, it struck the girl. Stubby and I felt it too, and could not repress our howls; and, as Don Antonio looked at the faces of the audience, cracking a small, innocent-looking whip, not a smile was to be seen, only a stupid grin here and there from a ploughboy or two who were in the habit of grinning at everything.

'What a sorrowful sound!' said the girl. 'Do you think the dogs like it, Bill? Look at their faces. And what makes them all shivery-shaky when that smiling man looks at them and just touches that little whip? Oh, Bill! I don't want to see them jump through those blazing hoops. They will be burnt. There! one has fallen. He looks half dead with fear of the man's boot. Let us go out.'

'What, and lose our sixpences? I thought the show would please you, and you are so fond of dumb animals.'

'Bill, it is because I am so fond of them that I don't like this show. Let us go out and breathe the fresh air, and look at the happy creatures in the green fields, enjoying their lives as God meant them to do. Let us get away from that fellow with his ghastly grin and his poor dogs that obey him in deadly terror—poor dumb things! Their look will haunt me.'

They got up to go.

'We had better slip out too, I think,' said Stubby; and, with his usual independent swagger, he strutted forth after the couple, as if under their protection.

In vain I tried to pluck up courage to follow. I was neither so old nor so bold as Stubby. While I was wavering, the chance was gone, and I was alone in the midst of a crowd.

It seemed very long before the din and racket of the drums, trumpet, and tambourines ceased, and the buzz of talk among the lookers-on began to sink into silence. I wondered what I was to do next. So long as the people sat still in the barn, I felt tolerably safe under the benches and chairs; but they began to drop out by twos and threes, and then I felt afraid. I was worn out, too, with the long run of the morning and with the heat and noise since; so, seeing a heap of sacks which had been thrown aside in a corner when the barn was hastily cleared, I lay on them, and was soon fast asleep.

I do not know how long it was before I was waked by a hand which seized me roughly. A man lifted me up, and waving a great flaring light close to my eyes, to get a good look at me, called somebody else in the voice I knew to be Don Antonio's. A thin, dark-looking woman came up, and he spoke to her roughly.

'Get a muzzle, a collar, and a chain.'

I writhed in his hands and cried pitifully, he hurt me so, but I did not try to bite; I had never done such a thing in my life. But he soon made it impossible for me even to cry, for he bade the woman hold me while he tightly strapped up my mouth. She turned away with a slight shudder, but he caught me carelessly by one leg and tossed me after her.

'He will do,' he said to her; 'so none of your fuss.'

'If he can stand the training,' she answered.

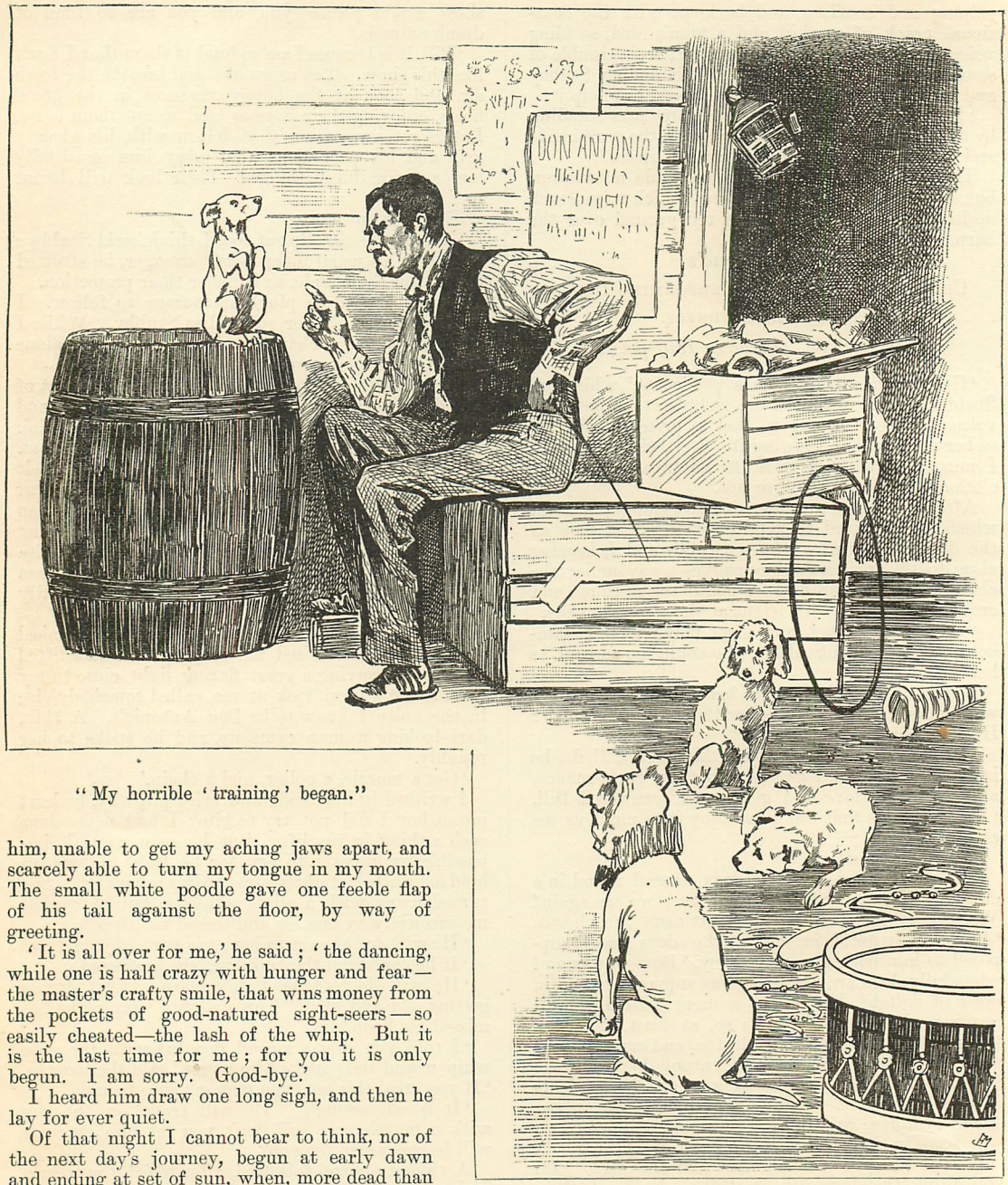
'He will do to take Fido's place. That dog is getting old and stiff. Three nights running he has missed his hoop.'

'I told you that a second flogging with the wire whip would only make him worse,' said the woman. 'If you steal this one, you may get into trouble.'

'It is safe enough. He will travel in the box with a muzzle on; and don't you let him go, or it will be the worse for you.'

A violent quarrel followed, after which the weary, dark-eyed woman went to the end of the barn to strip the wretched dogs of their tawdry coats, and her husband followed to give them grudgingly a bit at a time from his own fingers, some few morsels which they snapped up in starving haste.

At last, huddled up together, they slept, all but one, a little, white curly poodle, who lay apart, like a limp rag, hardly breathing. I fell down beside



"My horrible 'training' began."

him, unable to get my aching jaws apart, and scarcely able to turn my tongue in my mouth. The small white poodle gave one feeble flap of his tail against the floor, by way of greeting.

'It is all over for me,' he said; 'the dancing, while one is half crazy with hunger and fear—the master's crafty smile, that wins money from the pockets of good-natured sight-seers—so easily cheated—the lash of the whip. But it is the last time for me; for you it is only begun. I am sorry. Good-bye.'

I heard him draw one long sigh, and then he lay for ever quiet.

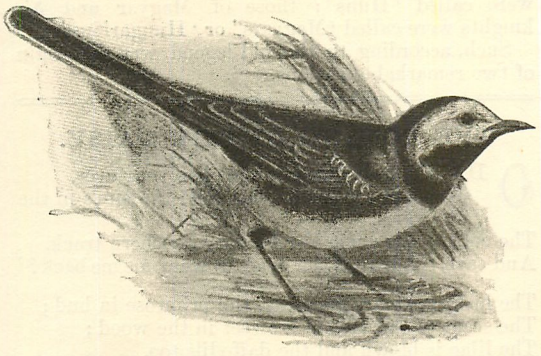
Of that night I cannot bear to think, nor of the next day's journey, begun at early dawn and ending at set of sun, when, more dead than alive, they took the wicked muzzle off and gave me water—food I was too ill to swallow.

The day after, my horrible 'training' began. They made me sit up, right on the end of a barrel with a halfpenny on my nose; if I fell down to rest my aching back, which felt just like a red-hot bar of iron, down came the whip-lash, circling round me like a fiery serpent, while the man's furious voice filled me with the fear of death. Rather than enrage him, I would sit stiff and still as some frozen creature, till I thought I must die under the torture; and die I surely must soon have done, like the little white poodle, if help had not come.

(*Continued on page* 227.)

A CLOUD WITH SILVER LINING.

A True Story for Young Photographers.



'I *AM* trying to be patient, but I can't forgive Jane yet,' said Archie, who was lying face downwards on the grass, and with something like a sob in his voice.

'Get up like a brave boy,' said Mother, 'and let us talk it over, and see if nothing can mend matters.'

'No one can mend my broken negative,' and Archie got up and lifted his troubled face; then, with Mother's arm round him, began to tell her all about it.

'You know, Mother, when you and Father gave me my camera because I was twelve, I did so want to do something good, and I never seemed to, for moving things were so difficult to get.* Then I found the wagtail's nest in the wall, and I told you about the cuckoo coming and laying the egg in it, and then the baby cuckoo (when it was hatched) turned out all the other little ones. I told the natural history master at school, and he said I ought to try and get a photo of the little cuckoo before it flew, so I set up my camera ready and watched near, and at last, on Friday, when you were away, the little cuckoo came to the edge of the hole with his wings half spread, and I snapped my camera before he got away. I developed it very carefully, and it was a beauty.* Well, the plate was drying in my room, and just now Jane went in to dust, and knocked it into the grate, and now it is in five or six pieces.'

'Could we not mend it, dear?'

Archie shook his head. 'Every crack would show in the picture; they always do.'

'Let us try, anyhow,' and Mother's cheery voice was very comforting, though she didn't know much about photography. 'Bring the pieces carefully, and a piece of glass the same size—an old negative with the film cleaned off will do.'

By the time Archie had got them, Mother had her diamond cement ready on her table by the window.

Then, on the piece of glass, the broken bits of photo plate (or negative) were laid, a delicate coating of cement was put on each cracked edge, and all the pieces were pressed firmly together, with a piece of stamp-paper bound round the outside edge, to keep them tight together in a compact whole. In the sun it dried quickly, so that an hour later Archie set up his printing frame—only to be disappointed, for each crack was visible on the print, spoiling any attempt at a picture.

But Archie was trying to be brave, and showed the result to his mother, saying only, 'It's no use, Mother, dear; but you have been so kind!'

Mother looked at the mended negative lying quite flat on Archie's hand. 'And yet, as you hold it *so*, the cracks are almost invisible.'

"The little cuckoo came to the edge with his wings half spread."

'Yes, I think it is because in printing the light comes all round, and, of course, that can't be helped. If the light comes all round, the mark of the crack prints much broader than a single scratch.'

'I am not so sure,' and Mother began to think. 'Suppose we try printing it at the bottom of a deep, narrow box, where the light can only fall from above.'

And some hours later Archie burst into his mother's room with almost a perfect print in his hand, the broken lines so faint as hardly to be traced. The plate, bound up as we have described, had been printed from at the bottom of a long box—a kind of tunnel, so to speak—down which the light could only come quite straight. So Archie's fine negative was not wasted, and his cloud had a silver lining, after all.

* This unique photograph is here reproduced: our illustration is drawn from a print from the negative mended as described in the story.

HUNS AND HUNGARIANS.

A Legend.

A VERY long time ago, in a far-distant age, two brothers, named Hunor and Magyar, dwelt together on the plains of Persia. Both were exceedingly fond of hunting, and wonderful horsemen. When they rode their spirited steeds they needed no saddles, and disdained the use of bridle or rein.

Early one morning the two brothers set forth on an exploring expedition. They had planned an excursion into remote forests hitherto unknown to man. A hundred brave knights followed in their train.

As the cavalcade swept along, scaring the wild birds and the timid hares, a huge stag darted out and stood suddenly in the way. Never had Hunor and Magyar beheld such a beauty. The head was crowned with a thicket of splendid antlers, and it was white as mountain snow.

'A royal beast, indeed!' exclaimed Hunor, as he bent his ever-ready bow.

Swift as was the flight of his arrow, the flight of the stag was swifter still, and the arrow was loosed in vain.

'After him, comrades!' shouted Magyar; and all day long the brothers and their knights were chasing the flying stag.

A pretty dance he led them. Over hill and dale they careered, pausing not for bite or sup, until, at eventide, the stag vanished as suddenly as he had appeared.

The weary hunters encamped for the night. When morning came, there again, right in front of them, stood the stag, which appeared even more beautiful than before.

The second day, like the first, was spent in a long and fruitless pursuit. Again, as the first star appeared in the sky, the creature vanished from sight.

On the third morning the tired hunters had scarcely awoke from their slumbers when they beheld the stag, which, larger and more beautiful than ever, lured them onward once more.

At sunset on that third day the horsemen came to the end of the forest, and found themselves beside a blue lake, on a wide, open plain. The stag was nowhere to be seen, nor has it ever again been seen by mortal eyes.

Then there fell upon the ears of the hunters a strange, sweet sound. Close at hand a hundred and two fair, white-robed maidens were dancing to the music of their own song. So fascinated by this sight were Hunor and Magyar and their followers, that they forgot all about the stag, and no longer felt hunger, thirst, or fatigue.

The band of maidens was led by two princesses, daughters of the King of that country. Hunor and Magyar bowed before them, and were graciously conducted to the palace. Here they and their knights were made so welcome that they stayed on for the rest of their lives. Hunor and Magyar married the two princesses, and each of the hundred knights was wedded to one of the hundred maidens. All these happy people felt endlessly grateful to the enchanted stag, to whom they owed their good fortune.

The descendants of Hunor and his fifty knights were called 'Huns'; those of Magyar and *his* knights were called 'Magyars,' or 'Hungarians.'

Such, according to this old legend, was the origin of two remarkable nations.

THE COMING OF THE DAISY.

O DAISY, dear Daisy, come open your eyes,
The lark's o'er the meadow, the sun's in the skies,
The cuckoo has come o'er his long southern track,
And says, 'Where is the daisy to welcome me back?'

The hedgerows are greening, the primrose in bud;
The scent of the violets is sweet in the wood;
The lilac is blown and the daffodils too,
And the children are watching and waiting for you.

So the daisy arose, and put on her white gown,
She came to the meadows, she came to the down;
The breeze stopped to kiss her before it went by,
And the sunbeams shone bright on her out of the sky.

And the world was all lovely and radiant as yore,
And the flowers in their beauty all blossomed once more,
For the winter was over, the birds 'gan to sing,
And the sweet daisy blossomed as sign of the spring.

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 211.)

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE return fire of the Cossacks flew wide. The Eagle fired a second shot at the surviving hound, which remained to sniff, whining at its companion's body. The shot was a good one, and killed the poor beast, but unfortunately it had another and unexpected result.

Old Peter, in an anguish of suspense and anxiety at the sound of the shooting, and unable to see his beloved young master, barely controlled his feelings sufficiently to stay where he was during the first interchange of shots. At the renewal of the firing, he could bear the suspense no longer, and came out of the shalashka, intending to find the two younger men and bring such support as a third revolver could offer. Seeing nothing of Paul, and hearing no sound in the direction of the place in which they lay hidden, he hastened towards where he could hear the Cossacks shouting to one another. Unfortunately Peter did not stick to the road; he went cautiously through the trees, sinking knee-deep in the snow at each step, and keeping himself covered by the pine-trunks and bushes as he advanced. Thus it happened his friends neither knew nor suspected that he had sallied forth to their assistance.

Five minutes later the unfortunate old man was sighted by a Cossack.

'There's one of them,' shouted the man, 'sneaking through the trees, trying to get within pistol-shot of us. Shall I shoot the rascal, sergeant?'

'Yes, shoot; where is he?' replied the sergeant angrily.

The Cossack aimed long. Peter was moving cautiously from tree to tree, gazing in every direction in search of his friends, as the Cossack pulled trigger.

Peter uttered a cry and staggered against a pine-stem, clasping it with his hands.

'Paul, Mark, help me!' he shouted.

Both had heard the cry and started up, recognising Peter's voice.

'It's old Peter; he has left the shalashka, and they have shot him!' cried Paul in anguish. 'Oh! if only I could see the old man.'

'I see him; he is wounded,' said the Eagle. 'Stay here, Paul; I will fetch him in.'

'No; it's my business, not yours. Show me where he is.'

'Impossible; all the trees are alike. Watch the Cossacks, and shoot down any fellow who seems to have seen me.'

'Be cautious then,' said Paul; but the Eagle was already well on his way, scouting splendidly behind trees and bushes, silent as a snake. Old Peter had slipped from his supporting pine-stem, and lay in the snow at its foot. Until the Eagle was close to the wounded old man he was not perceived.

Suddenly two Cossacks started forward simultaneously. 'There is another, going to fetch the wounded one,' they said. 'Shall we shoot?'

'No,' cried the sergeant; 'the orders are to bring them in alive if possible. Watch him. Let him fetch the other; then we shall know where they are hidden, all three. There is something to be made out of this business.'

The Eagle reached Peter unseen, as he supposed. He dragged the old man into safety behind a bush and examined his wound. He was shot through the chest, but was still alive, and apparently conscious. He gazed at the Eagle.

'Is it Paul,' he murmured, 'or the other?'

'I am Oriol,' said the Eagle. 'I have come to fetch you in. Paul is all right; are you badly hurt?'

'Yes; I shall die. It is useless to carry me, though I should like to gaze, once more, upon my little Count. Tell the Countess, Mark, that I repented my sin, and must be forgiven for the sake of my devotion. It was against you I sinned as much as against her. Say you forgive me.'

'You are raving, Peter; I will carry you to the shalashka,' said the Eagle; 'there we can attend to your wound. The Cossacks shall not see us. Paul is watching, and would keep them off if they did.'

He took up the old man tenderly, and would have carried him; but Peter groaned, and entreated to be set down.

'No, I am dying; do not move me. Tell the Countess I thank God that we—that we found——'

Peter paused and coughed several times; then he lay back exhausted. A minute later he tried to sit up.

'Swear that you will love him just as though you had never been parted—swear it—then my sin will certainly be forgiven.'

'I swear it,' said the Eagle, anxious to relieve the old man, though he did not understand what it was that weighed upon him.

'Ah, thank God! Tell the Countess——'

The old man never finished his sentence. Another fit of coughing overtook him, and, when he ceased and lay back, the Eagle saw that he was dead. He lifted the body reverently and carried it towards the shalashka, keeping as much as possible under cover. Paul watched him anxiously, in terror lest a volley from the Cossacks should cut down the Eagle just as it had suddenly destroyed Peter. But the soldiers had no intention of firing, and the Eagle reached the shalashka in safety, half carrying, half dragging his burden. Paul waited but a moment or two; then, unable to bear the suspense any longer, he followed.

'He's dead,' said the Eagle, rising from bending over Peter as his companion entered the shalashka. 'They shot him down.'

Paul bent down by the body of his old friend and servant and groaned aloud.

'Dear old Peter,' he sobbed, 'you have lost your life in helping me to regain my freedom. Good old friend, I shall never forget you, nor will my mother.'

'Was he a little mad?' asked the Eagle, quite reverently. 'He said all sorts of extraordinary things before he died, and he spoke this afternoon as if he felt he was going to die.'

'He was as sane as you or I. They say people do sometimes have a kind of presentiment of coming death. What extraordinary things did he say?'

'One was that it was against me he sinned as well as against the Countess. What does that mean? How has he sinned, and why against me, of all people?'

'I don't know; his brain may have been wandering. He was wounded, you see. Anything else?'

'He said, "Tell the Countess I thank God we found——" and there it ended, for he died before he could finish the sentence.'

'That meant me, I suppose. He thanked God for finding me. Nothing mad about that, considering that he came with the intention of finding me.'

'Before that he had asked me to swear that I would love "him" (which I suppose meant you, for you are the only *he* that counted in his estimation) "just as though we had never been parted." What did that mean?'

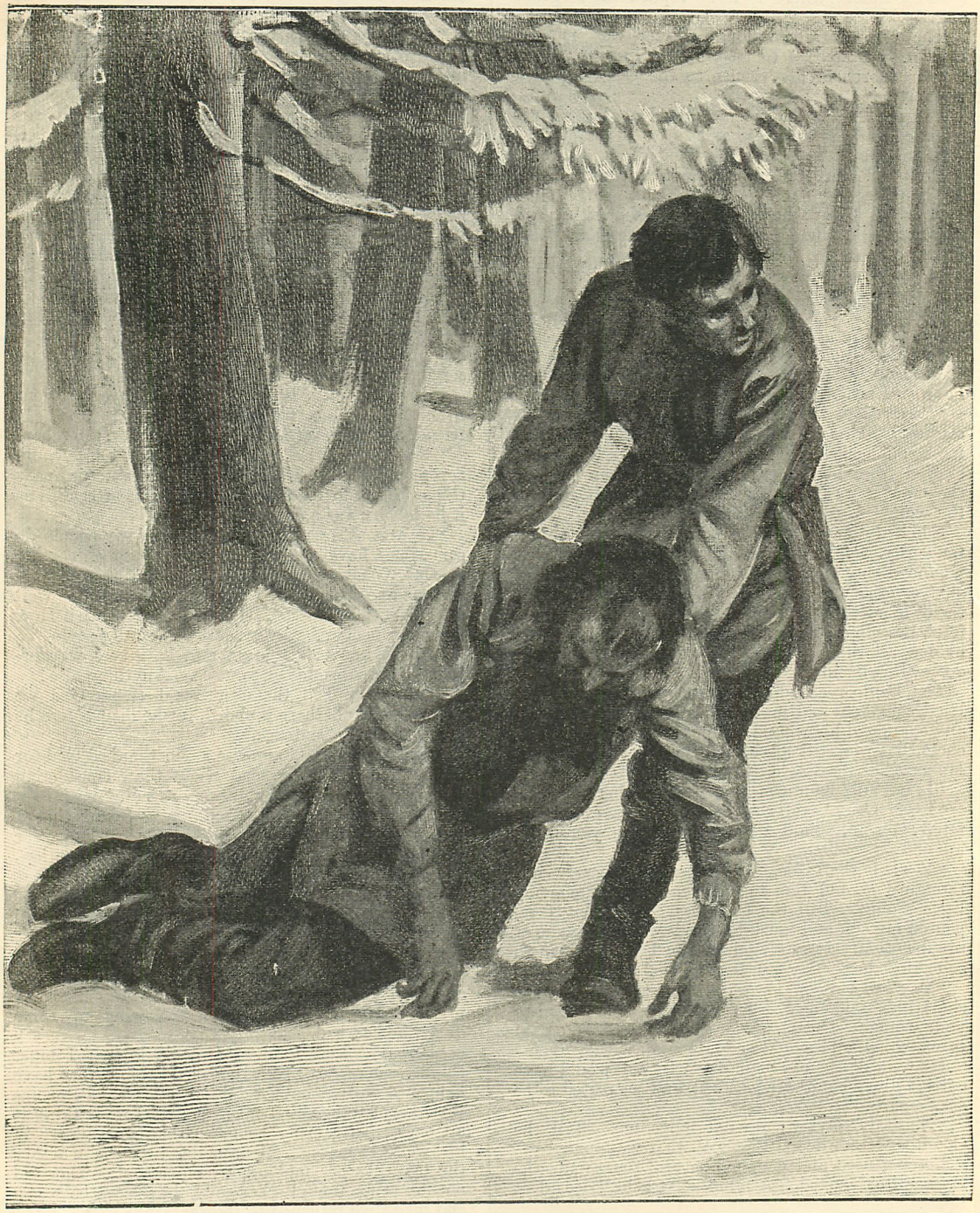
Paul started up. "As though we had never been parted." Did he say that?'

'Those very words. It seemed to me that he supposed we had known and been attached to one another before we came together at the Yermatsky prison. He must have been following up some dream he had had.'

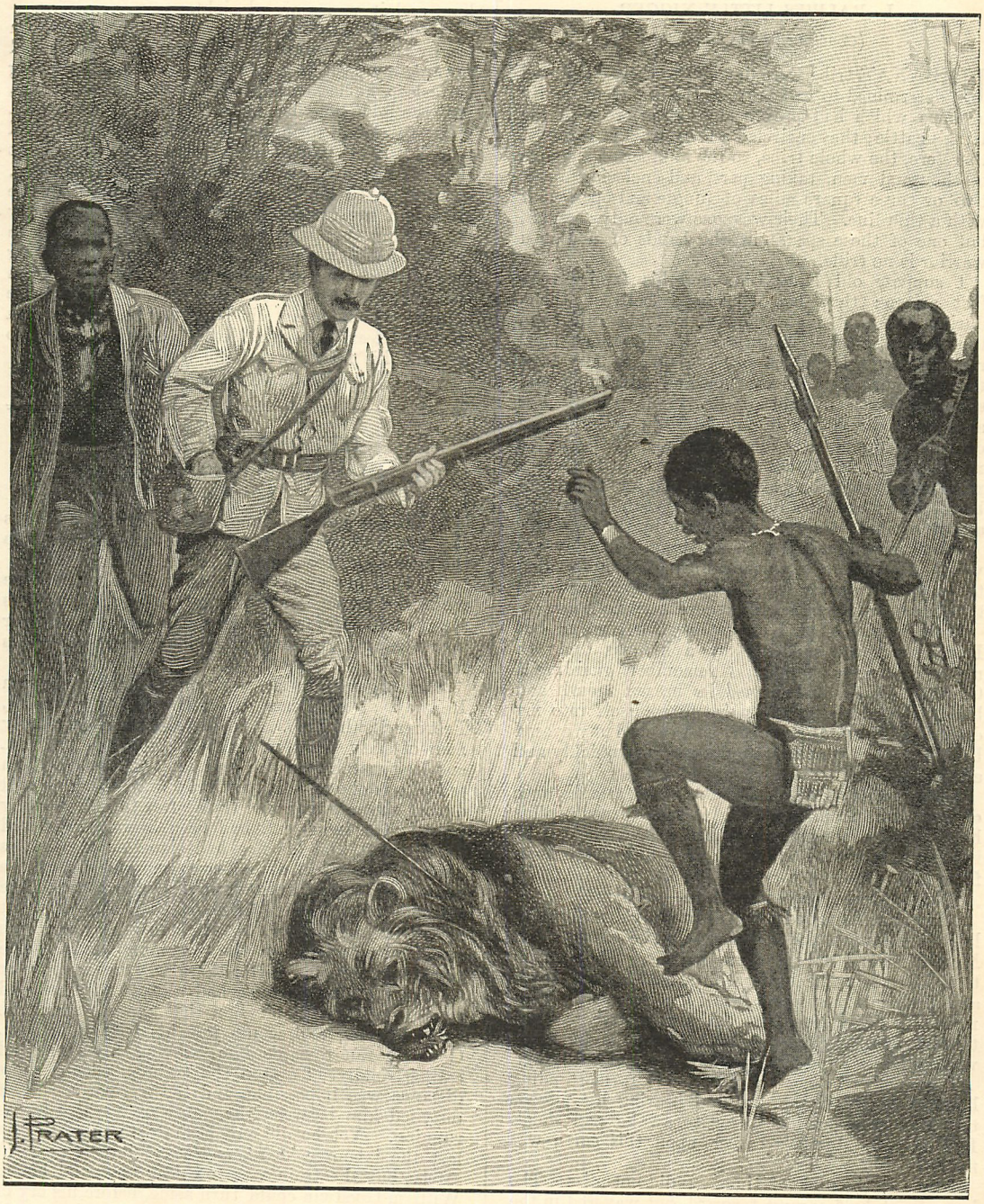
'Perhaps,' said Paul. 'I don't know; I must think. There are several very odd things that have happened during the last day or two. Old Peter has been very strange and mysterious. I must think it all over. There may be more than we suppose in his weird remarks. Meanwhile, just see whether the Cossacks are making any movement. They did not fire at us, though they must have seen both you and me as we returned to the shalashka.'

The Eagle looked out. 'Two of them are coming along in front with a white flag,' he said, excitedly. 'Can we trust them? They have their rifles.'

(*Continued on page* 230.)



"He dragged the old man into safety."



"Momba dancing a war-dance over the dead lion."

ROUND THE CAMP-FIRE.

I.—RALPH'S LITTLE NIGGER.

(*Continued from page* 203.)

UMBANA'S tribe were devoted to their chief, and determined to make sure of the impudent family of lions which had presumed to interfere with the King's cattle; they encircled a large tract of country, therefore, the whole tribe, to the number of a couple of thousand men, taking part, and enclosing about two or three square miles of jungle and open veldt with a thin line. Their weapons were only assegais, but one of these spears in the hands of a Bantu warrior is no trifle.

I suppose old King Lion and his family were fast asleep; they had consumed between them, during the past night, a cow and her calf from the King's herd. Doubtless this excellent meal required a good deal of sleeping off; at any rate, the clamour of the two thousand advancing and shouting Bantus did not appear to rouse them. For an hour I sat or lay in my ambush, and no sign or sound announced their presence. I began to make up my mind that the trackers had made a mistake, and that the great beasts had left the neighbourhood, or had, at any rate, changed their quarters, and were not in the region enclosed by the beaters.

I must now admit a terrible thing. The day was very hot. I fell asleep, a most unsportsmanlike thing to do, but my excuse was that I was now convinced that the beat had failed, and there were no lions.

How long I slept I cannot say for certain, but I was awakened suddenly by a hideous din. In my sleep a great dragon, I remember, guarding a Chinese temple, had opened its brazen mouth and bellowed at me; so the noise fitted itself into my dreams. As soon, however, as I opened my eyes, I beheld a sight which awakened me very quickly and effectually.

Little twelve-year-old Momba stood at a distance of five yards from me, with his back turned; in his hand was an assegai, which he was in the act of hurling at a great lion, which crouched fifteen paces from him. Momba was shouting loudly to me:

'Ralpi, awake, or you are dead—me also!'

Almost as I opened my eyes the lion drew back to hurl itself upon the child, while the assegai left Momba's hand at the same instant. The weapon buried itself in the half-rushing, half-leaping beast, and fortunately stopped him for a moment. That moment's delay saved the lad, for it gave me time to aim carefully at the huge brute, as he stood waving his tail and roaring angrily, about to spring.

I remember seeing the little dark form standing helpless before the brute, and hearing his piteous treble voice appealing to me to awake and shoot. If I missed, Momba's career upon this earth was finished.

I fired in the nick of time. I did not miss. The huge beast half sprang forward, but wavered in the air, turned a somersault, and fell dead.

The sound of the shot was the signal for frantic yells and shouts from the entire tribe, now closing in upon the spot on which I stood. Excited Bantus came rushing into view, flourishing assegais, panting, shouting, grunting; and in the foreground was little Momba dancing a war-dance over the dead lion, and it was a weird sight.

It turned out that the boy had sighted the lion family heading towards my ambush, and had rushed towards my position in order to warn me. Finding me asleep, he had endeavoured to awake me in time, but the old lion had given chase. Fortunately, upon reaching springing distance, the lion had roared, and I had awaked. There was no doubt that I owed my safety to Momba, and that I had, in turn, saved his life also. I felt grateful to the child, but the gratitude of the tribe, and especially of the King, was greater. I assure you, I was made to feel that I was a personage, a hero, a very big swell indeed, and my position at the kraal from that moment was an enviable one. They gave me a name which meant, in Bantu, 'the man whom the lions fear.' As for Momba, he was devoted to me, and his father was little less.

(*Continued on page* 262.)

HEROES OF DUTY.

VI.—WILLIAM GOODWIN, THE RAILROAD FLAGMAN.

THERE is never a time when over our railways gangs of men are not moving to and fro to keep the metals and road in good repair.

As, with few exceptions, this work must be done while the traffic is actually in progress, one man is always told off for no other duty than to watch for approaching trains and give timely warning to his fellows.

Such a gang was at work on the North London Railway, at Kingsland Road Bridge, on Saturday, February 28th, 1880. William Goodwin, an elderly man of sixty years of age, was appointed flagman, and kept watch over the four lines of metals which take the traffic of this busy railway. All went well during the morning, and train after train had safely passed; Goodwin's call had been heard and obeyed by the men, and his flag had signalled the line as clear. But when, at half-past one o'clock, on the approach of a fast train from Kew, he sounded the call, one of the gang failed to hear him; the rest moved out of danger, but this man continued his work, unconscious of the oncoming train. The signalman saw his peril; there was not a moment to lose, for some seconds had already been allowed to pass under the impression that the workman was only delaying and would join his fellows in time. Goodwin ran towards him, waving his arms and calling loudly. To stop the train in such a short distance was impossible, and the flagman's path of duty led him between the metals over which it was running. Yet he did not hesitate to take it. At last the labourer heard, and leapt into a place of safety, but the train was too near now, and before William Goodwin could turn aside, before his cry of warning that had saved the life of another could cease to echo, he was struck by the advancing engine and instantly killed. At such moments, when there is little time to think, it is only the truest courage that acts with promptitude.

NOBODY'S DOG.

(*Continued from page* 220.)

CHAPTER IX.

BUT the horrors of my life with Don Antonio came to a sudden end. In one of his quarrels with his unhappy wife, he dealt her such a heavy blow that it stretched her lifeless on the ground. Under cover of night, he hid the body in a ditch, and hurried away, leaving the show, as well as the dogs, behind.

We dogs were soon taken away, by kind, strong policemen, to a Home, where we were cared for in peace and plenty. The rest and ease were blissful, indeed, after our sad bondage. Many other dogs lived in the place—for it was a public Home for lost dogs—occupying rows of cells or loose-boxes, with iron gratings in front.

All the dogs belonging to our troupe were placed in one large pen together, and at first we were glad to spend most of our time in sleep. A good plain meal was served out each day—enough, but not too much; fresh water was always at hand, and our beds of straw were kept nice and clean, the floors being carefully sprinkled with sawdust.

I saw and heard many other dogs, of all sorts and sizes. The man who managed us was kind, but firm; he carried a whip, but we soon learnt that he never used it for any dog who did his best, though he cracked it at those who bullied other dogs, or behaved badly.

One day the manager came to our box with a policeman.

'My orders are to take one of these dogs to show in court.'

'Is the trial of the man calling himself Don Antonio on now?'

'Yes; the judge has ordered it,' said the policeman. 'The lawyers want to prove the cruelty of the prisoner's disposition.'

'Well, they won't find that difficult,' said the manager. 'Look at this poor little animal—he is covered with sores; and look at this one, so thin that his bones are nearly through his skin.'

'This little fellow had not been in the wretch's keeping long, I suppose?' he added, 'for he is plump compared to the others. But he has a wretched look, too.

'Lately stolen, I shouldn't wonder,' said the manager. 'The marks of a tight muzzle are on his jaw now.'

'Well, I must be off,' said the policeman; and he departed, leading one of our number by a string.

The poor little creature, when he found himself in a stranger's power, sat up on his trembling hind-legs, and beseechingly waved his fore-paws, as if to plead 'Not guilty,' there being no tambourine for him to beat; then, finding that he was neither scolded nor struck, stretched himself out at the policeman's feet and grovelled thankfully.

'Poor little beast!' said the manager; 'how can the public pay money to see such things, and fill the pockets of such chaps as that Antonio!'

After about an hour, the policeman re-appeared with the little dog in charge.

'And how are things going with Don Antonio?' asked the manager.

'Penal servitude,' answered the policeman. 'This little dog here sat up before the judge and all, and cried pitifully, and then lay down and pretended to die for the King. The creature did all but talk, and went round and showed the scars on his body, and wagged his poor tail when the ladies patted him, and took out their handkerchiefs when they saw how thin he was. Even the judge looked queer. The dog was about the best witness there, but some biggish boys came forward too, who had been peeping on the sly at the prisoner while he was practising with his dogs in some hole or corner, and thought nobody saw. They swore to great cruelty, and to his beating and kicking the woman when she tried to interfere. She is well out of his clutches, I should say. When it was all over, and the prisoner was carried off, shrieking and screaming like the coward he was, a benevolent lady came forward and asked the judge what was to become of the dogs. She and the judge talked it over as pleasant as could be, and the end of it was that she offered to pay for the keep of the whole lot here in the Home till good masters could be found for them—and here, I believe, the lady comes.'

The policeman saluted, and the manager raised his hat, as a beautifully dressed lady approached.

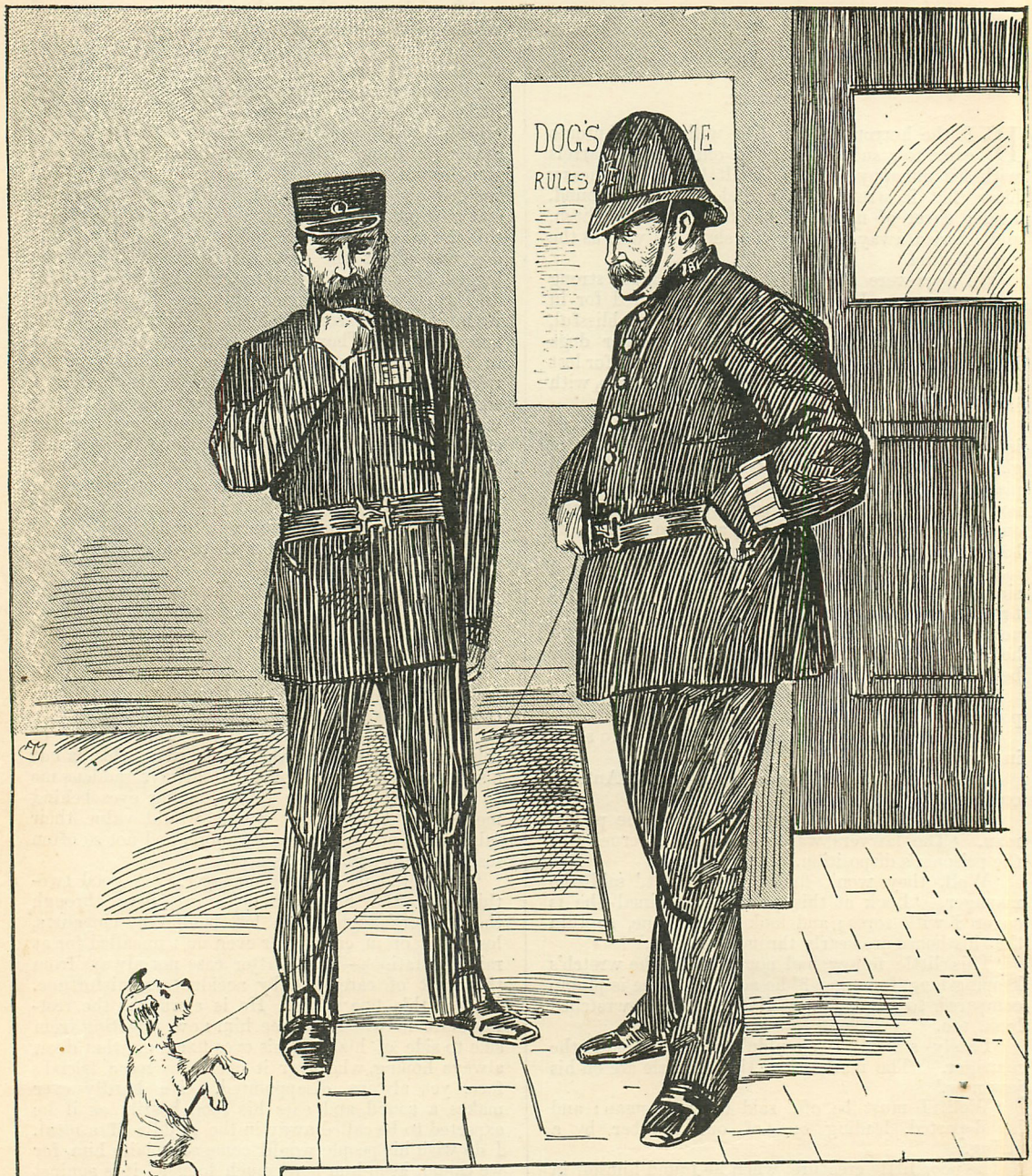
'Good morning, Manager,' she said, with a sunny smile. 'We have often met before, I think.'

'Often, Madam,' said the manager, 'much to the benefit of the animals in this Home, who have good cause to thank you.'

'Poor things!' said the lady. 'But a place of this sort, even when as well managed as this, is but a sorry substitute for home. It always saddens me to come away and leave these longing eyes behind me. How I wish that people would value their faithful friends and servants more, and not so often lose them through carelessness.'

'True, Madam,' said the manager. 'A good two-thirds of the homeless dogs are here through their owners' neglect, are left behind by bicyclists, lost sight of in crowds, or even left uncalled for at railway stations—in the latter case not always from the want of care, but by accident or misfortune. Look at this fine collie. He is always in the restless state in which you see him now, fidgeting from side to side of his box, his eyes fixed on that door, always hoping, whenever it opens, to see a friend's face, yet always disappointed. He hardly ever makes a sound, and eats his food hastily, as if he expected to be called away in the middle of a meal. I do wish his people would come and claim him, for we cannot keep him here much longer—it is against the rules.'

'I wish I could take him,' said the lady; 'but, living in London, I could not hope to keep so large a dog in health. It is an unfit place, I think, for any dog, and for a large dog an absolutely cruel abode. However, I thought of giving a home with myself to one of these poor things, though it must be in London for at least a part of the year. Perhaps under my care it may have more enjoyment of life than it



"The poor little creature sat upon his hind legs."

might have with some chance purchaser. Which do you advise me to take?'

'This rough-coated terrier, Madam, undoubtedly,' said the manager, pointing me out. 'He is by far the strongest dog, and is likely to do you credit. His head and eyes are perfect; he is good-tempered, and will improve under good treatment.'

'Then I will settle on this one, and please keep the rest at my expense for the present. I will pay for their board and lodging, and also for that of the lost collie, whose master or mistress, let us hope, will soon turn up!'

"We're gathering limpets on the rocks."

A carriage was waiting outside, into which the lady got, and I was handed in to sit on her lap. She spoke soft, soothing words to me, and never took her light hand from my neck, just tightening her hold if, in my fright at the strangeness of it all, I tried to spring out of the carriage.

(*Continued on page* 237.)

THE LIMPET GATHERERS.

WE are three busy little folk,
Within our little bay
We're gathering limpets on the rocks,
On this fine summer day.

The sea that covered rock and coast
  Has ebbed far out once more,
Now is the time for us to go
  And work upon the shore.

These little creatures that we get,
  Though small, are very strong;
And sometimes ere we have enough,
  We have to toil for long.
They cling so tightly to the rock,
  Almost as if they knew
That we were come to gather them—
  I wonder if they do!

Bobbie and I the gathering do,
  While Jack looks on the while,
And cheers us while we are at work
  With many a word and smile.
When he's a little older grown,
  Then he will get some too,
And not stand idly watching us,
  As now he loves to do.

I think one lesson we may learn
  From limpets—'tis to cling
With all our heart and mind and will
  To every noble thing.
As they cling fast unto the rock,
  May we to truth hold tight,
And never, never turn aside
  From what is good and right.

BLIND ANIMALS.

PEOPLE sometimes say that though it is bad to lose any of the senses, the loss of sight is worst of all. Probably this is true, though we find many blind persons who are wonderfully cheerful, and not only that, but those who are blind have accomplished a good deal. There have been blind men who could travel about in the world, just as well, seemingly, as others having eyesight; some prove excellent musicians, some great preachers or speakers. When we study the history of animals, we come upon several species, mostly of small size, that are always blind, and this does not interfere with their life: indeed, the blindness may be suited to the place where they are usually found, and to their habits. But some mistakes have been made, and animals have been thought to be blind when really they had eyes, if very small ones.

Most of us have heard the saying, 'Blind as a mole,' but this is incorrect. Our common English mole has eyes, though they are small ones, and, indeed, it does not need to see much, its life being nearly all passed under-ground. In North America, there is a water mole with eyes so tiny that it is difficult to put a human hair into the opening. Still, in Southern Europe, and at the Cape, two species of mole do exist which have no traces of any eyes. Eastern Europe has a rat with eyes deeply set and minute, so that it cannot possibly see to any distance. The remarkable Mammoth Caves of Kentucky contain both rats and bats quite blind.

Birds may sometimes lose their sight, and if this happens, the poor creature cannot live long; but there is no instance of any species being naturally blind. Blindness would be fatal to the activity and alertness which distinguish the bird-race generally.

When we come down to the reptiles, we discover another mistake: the blindworm, a familiar British snake, is not blind, but has quick and clear sight. Snakes are, however, to be seen in caverns, which are nearly or even totally blind; they find their prey (chiefly small insects) by the sense of touch. Fishes exist which have never seen the light of day, and one species is taken upon British coasts; it lives as a parasite upon larger fish, clinging to them by its suckers. Another species of eyeless fish dwells in the pools or lakes of caves, where no daylight comes.

When we come to the order of insects, the number of blind species is larger; this state suits the mode of life natural to some of them, even though they may not live in the dark. Many people suppose that the bulk of caterpillars are blind, their eyes not being noticeable; but they possess these organs, usually three, set in the form of a triangle. We generally find that even those dwelling in the heart of a tree have eyes. It is amongst the beetles especially that we discover blind species, often under-ground; but probably they are not deaf as well, since the tapping beetles, such as the death-watch, or *anobium*, will answer each other from a distance, so that the saying 'Deaf as a beetle' is scarcely a good comparison. It is singular that multitudes of tropical ants are entirely blind; the notorious driver ant is so, and yet it is able to destroy hosts of other insects, and all these eyeless species are very active. Blind spiders are the occupants of dark corners in cellars or caves, and blind shrimps have been brought up from deep wells.

HE GAVE IT AWAY!

NUMBERLESS are the stories told of George Washington. Upon one occasion, while the American army was in camp, Washington heard that the coloured sentries were not altogether reliable. He determined to test the matter for himself. One night, therefore, when the password was 'Cambridge,' the General went out, and walked up to a coloured sentry.

'Who goes there?' cried the sentinel.

'A friend,' was the reply.

'Advance, friend, and give the countersign.'

'Roxburgh,' said Washington.

'No, sah,' replied the soldier.

'Medford,' said Washington.

'No, sah,' was the response.

'Charlestown,' said Washington.

The sentry lost patience. 'I tell you, Massa Washington,' he said emphatically, 'no man go by here without he say "Cambridge."'

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 223.)

CHAPTER XXV.

THE two lads awaited the approach of the Cossacks, revolver in hand.

'What is it?' Paul shouted, when the fellows were still fifty yards away.

'Peace,' shouted the sergeant in return; 'consultation and so forth. It may be that we are pursuing innocent men.'

'That means the rascals intend to cheat their employers by taking our money,' explained Paul in a whisper. 'We won't make any objections. Come, then,' he said aloud; 'but remember that we are well armed and will stand no nonsense.'

The sergeant and his man entered the shalashka. There was just room for four men to sit.

'Now,' said Paul, when all were seated, 'let us understand one another. You suggest that perhaps you are pursuing innocent men. Let us assume that we are innocent men. He whom you have shot was certainly the most harmless of beings, and has never been a convict. Let us begin with an explanation as to his death. Why was he shot?'

The sergeant shrugged his shoulders. 'My men are young and ardent, each anxious to excel in the performance of his duty. The general order being to shoot down escaped convicts, this man fell a victim. You may thank me that your life and that of the other have been spared.'

'The victim is an innocent man.'

'Oh, pardon me! Two escaped convicts, so my instructions have it, and a third who assisted in their escape, therefore at least equally guilty with the actual convicts. Moreover, a warder or gate-keeper at the Yermatsky prison was drowned, probably by this third person who is now dead. Take my advice, young man, and confine your attention to the present moment and your position, which is a perilous one. You are in our power, of that there is no doubt; yes, I know you are armed, but our rifles carry further and more precisely than your revolvers. It is certainly in our power to capture you.'

'We should fight for our liberty,' blurted the Eagle, 'and you would be the first to fall, Mr. Sergeant.'

The sergeant shrugged his shoulders. 'I do not doubt it,' he said. 'You are both strong and fearless young men; I have observed it, and possibly you might succeed in killing one or two of us, myself among the number. But in the end we should undoubtedly either destroy or capture you. Now, that would be a disaster for both parties. I do not wish to be shot. You are fine young men, and perhaps there are those who love you and desire your return to Russia.'

'Yes, yes—we admit all that,' said Paul. 'Let us proceed to business, sergeant. You wish to make a bargain with us—is that it?'

The sergeant's face assumed an expression of shocked surprise.

'Dmitri,' he remarked, addressing the young soldier who had accompanied him, 'I consider the attitude of these convicts somewhat threatening; go outside, and stand at a distance of ten yards from the shalashka. Have your rifle at your shoulder, and at the slightest indication of an attempt to escape or to attack me, fire!'

Dmitri saluted and left the tent. He took up his position a few yards from the shalashka, and stood prepared to fire if need should arise.

The sergeant now resumed the conversation, but in lower tones.

'I do not expect any danger,' he said, 'for I think I am dealing with reasonable men; but it is well that our talk should be unheard. You said that perhaps I am ready to make a bargain with you. I am.'

'Very well,' said Paul; 'state your terms. But our escape from Yermatsky was expensive, and has left us very much poorer than we were a week or two ago. Come, now, your price?'

'One thousand roubles.'*

Paul shook his head. 'Too much,' he said. 'I might find the money, but it would leave me with a sum insufficient to see us safely back to Russia; it is a long way from here to St. Petersburg, and we may yet fall into the hands of other gentlemen, like yourself, anxious to lighten our purses.'

The sergeant's face assumed a determined expression. 'You must admit that is not my affair,' he said. 'The future is yours, not mine; I can only deal with facts which lie, as it were, to hand. I have you in my power. I ask for a thousand roubles as recompense for the risk I run—a grave one, I assure you—in allowing you to escape. Should the authorities hear of my action, my career in the Tsar's service would end suddenly and disgracefully. Every one of my soldiers would require a share of this sum, you will remember. For the whole responsibility and risk, all of which would rest upon my shoulders alone, I should receive, perhaps, five hundred roubles.'

'And a further twenty-five for the murder of my poor old friend whom you have shot. I offer you fifty pounds in full quittance,' said Paul.

The sergeant shook his head. 'Freedom, return to friends, to Russia, to the happy life, think of it! And two of you! It is worth fifty pounds apiece, surely!'

Then Paul did one of the most foolish things he had ever done in his life. He produced his letter-case, drew out a bundle of notes, and counted them. He did not do this for display, but simply because he wished to ascertain how much ready money he could still dispose of. He did not reflect, as old Peter would have done with his better knowledge of the rapacity and greed of the Russian official, that to allow his wealth to be seen was to put arms into the hands of his enemies.

Paul drew out a bundle of notes and made a rapid calculation, going quickly through the roll in order to gain a rough idea of the sum it contained.

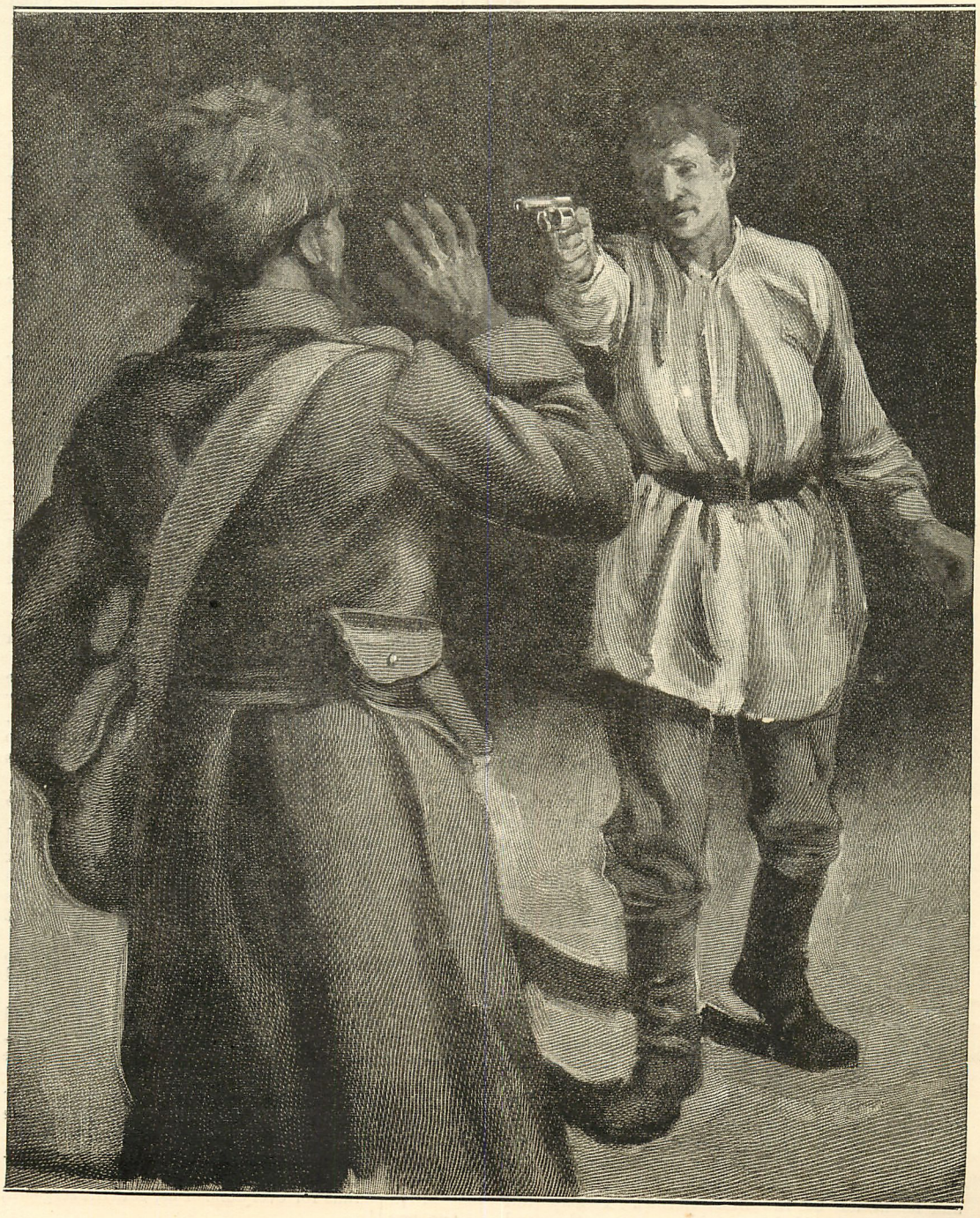
The sergeant's face, if any one had watched it, would have proved an interesting study at this moment. His eyes blazed with avarice, his mouth twitched, his fingers twisted with the covetous desire to snatch—a desire controlled with difficulty.

But Paul was busy computing, and the Eagle—unaccustomed to the sight of so much money—had also fixed his eyes upon the bundle of notes, so that neither youth caught sight of the face of the sergeant.

(*Continued on page* 234.)

* Equivalent to about one hundred pounds.

"Paul made a rapid calculation."



"'Answer before I count ten!'"

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 231.)

CHAPTER XXVI.

COMPLETING his calculation, Paul concluded that he still possessed some four thousand roubles (roughly four hundred pounds) in cash, which did not include two hundred pounds secreted about his person, in cast of emergency, and the blank cheque, payable to his order, which the Countess had included in her packet for use when he reached more civilised regions, and which was hidden in the lining of his waistcoat.

The sergeant, too, made his calculations, and arrived at the same conclusion, namely, that Paul's purse contained from four to five hundred pounds. 'Idiot that I was to demand so little!' was his first thought.

'However,' his second ran—but the remainder of this thought shall not be revealed at present. You shall learn presently in how vile and treacherous a groove the reflections of Mr. Sergeant were accustomed to move.

'I think I can afford you seventy-five pounds,' said Paul, pocketing his letter-case. 'That is my last word!'

The sergeant shook his head very decisively.

'My friend,' he said, 'you are too simple. To show me all this money, and then to offer me a pitiful seventy-five pounds! Do you know that the punishment meted out to those convicts who have escaped, and have been recaptured, is the knout, twenty-five blows, and shackles for three months? Yet you bargain for a few roubles. I add a quarter to my first demand: you will now pay me one thousand two hundred and fifty roubles, and that is *my* last word!'

'You thief!' said Paul, angrily. 'I was a fool to show you my money.'

'That is true,' laughed the sergeant; 'you are a rich man; we others are not accustomed to the sight of so much money; it excites us. Let me advise you, do not let others see your capital; protest that you have but this or that sum, and are offering your last farthing.'

'Thanks,' said Paul, 'I dare say your advice is very wise; when I want lessons in treachery and dishonesty, I suppose I could scarcely go to a better master than you.'

'You are rude; I add ten pounds for the insult,' said the sergeant. 'Come, you will find it wiser and perhaps cheaper to end this conversation, and hand over the sum demanded, one thousand three hundred and fifty roubles.'

'Eagle,' said Paul quietly, 'cover that soldier outside with your revolver; mine is covering Mr. Sergeant. Now, Mr. Sergeant, don't utter a cry or frighten your young companion out there, because in that case a fight might suddenly begin, and you and he would be the first victims. I may tell you that I should have paid you one thousand roubles, but for your greed in making these further demands. As it is, you shall have seven hundred and fifty or none; come, answer before I count ten!'

The Eagle covered the unsuspecting soldier, who had gazed, all eyes, at Paul since the moment when he had produced the roll of bank-notes; the Eagle laughed with pure delight.

'Well done, Paul!' he said; 'that's the way to treat the scamp. Count your ten quickly, and at eleven we will both fire.'

Paul began to count.

'I agree, I agree!' said the sergeant. 'Perhaps I was wrong to seem avaricious; the sight of so much money was maddening; you will forgive me, young sir, and pay me the thousand first demanded?'

'Not I,' said Paul. 'I shall pay you seven hundred and fifty, and no more; you may thank you own greed for the loss of twenty-five pounds.'

Paul counted out the money, revealing for the second time his wealth, the disclosure of which was so terrible a danger to him.

'There,' he said, handing over the money, 'take it, my friend, and go. Do not attempt any further haggling with us, because, if I see you again, I shall shoot without further words.'

The sergeant pocketed his money, his face all a-twitch, but whether with gratified avarice or with anger by reason of his insulting words, Paul did not know.

'It is well,' he said; 'that, then, is finished. You gain nothing by rudeness, my friend. I have befriended you, and you have paid me for my good offices. The freedom which I have offered you is worth more, believe me, than the price which you have paid for it.'

'Well,' said Paul, 'remember that I do not trust you, and that if I should find you or your men upon my track again, I shall shoot you from an ambush.'

'One does not expect gratitude,' sighed the sergeant, 'or even simple justice. Farewell, young man. Remember my advice: take care of your money, do not disclose your wealth; it is not every one who is so honest or so moderate in his demands as myself.'

Paul bowed, but made no reply. The Eagle, however, spoke his mind.

'You treacherous rascal!' he said, 'my friend here has been far too generous; you may thank your stars that the management of this business was not in my hands instead of his. Get out of this quickly, or my fingers will be about your throat before I know it.'

The sergeant retired hastily. 'Thanks be to Heaven,' he retorted over his shoulder, 'that I had to deal with a wise man and not with a fool.'

'Yes,' said the Eagle; 'but the wise man had the better of you—I am quite content; nevertheless, thank Heaven that you have escaped with a whole skin!'

The sergeant took no further notice of the Eagle; he rejoined his escort, who awaited him in some excitement.

'Have you done well, Karl Karlitch?' he asked. 'How much?'

'Five pounds for every one of us,' said the sergeant, 'no less!'

'Ah—no less! and how much more?'

The sergeant looked grimly displeased. 'Is that not enough, fool? How much do you expect?'

'Karl Karlitch, did you see his packet of bank-notes? He is a rich man—he has thousands of roubles! You should have bargained for more!'

'Be quiet, fool! I have eyes in my head, like you; moreover, I have something else in my head also, which apparently you have not.'

'What is that?' asked the young soldier, grinning. 'Brains?'

'Yes, brains,' said the sergeant. 'What matter how much of his money I have actually in hand? Naturally he shall not be allowed to disappear with so much in his pocket. How do we know that he came by it honestly? The matter must be inquired into. I think we shall be richer before we are much older.'

(*Continued on page* 246.)

STINGING CATERPILLARS.

A RECENT summer was remarkable for the large quantity of rain which fell nearly all over the British islands. The moisture was very good for some insects, but not for others, which suffered from it. Amongst the insects that abounded were those of the gnat tribe, and myriads of them came from the ponds and marshes into towns or villages. Many children, as well as grown-up people, were stung by them, getting painful swellings, which did not go away quickly. Besides our English gnats there were mosquitoes about, which had travelled with timber from Sweden and Norway. Some stinging flies were plentiful here and there, and people had to keep watch against these foes. But after the early summer, caterpillars were generally scarce, and vegetables escaped injury fairly well.

Caterpillars are not provided with a proboscis or borer, and any irritation of the skin they may cause arises from their hairs or spines. We are not likely, however, to take much harm from them in England; but there are hot countries where big caterpillars thrive, equipped with large spines, and travellers have to be cautious should they wish to take them as curiosities. Entomologists or insect-collectors, who sometimes handle caterpillars of different sorts, are likely to suffer from them now and then, and so are gardeners who have to remove them when they are damaging shrubs or plants.

In our country we have a few spiny caterpillars, but certain hairy ones are most complained of. About the worst offenders are the caterpillars of the brown-tail moth, which feed on hawthorn hedges. Persons merely brushing past hedges have suddenly felt a tickling of the skin, followed by painful lumps, and wondered what was the cause, not thinking about the caterpillars. It is supposed this irritation is from the loose hairs that are thrown off, but some think the hairs are moistened by the caterpillars with a poisonous fluid. It is singular that the pretty white moth, if touched, can also bring out a rash or pimple.

Other caterpillars of the stinging sort are several of the tiger moths and the eggars. One of the eggar caterpillars has been known to irritate the hand through a thick glove. The dust or little hairs of the cocoons are also to be avoided.

DOORS, LOCKS, AND KEYS.

III.—THE YETT OF CAWDOR.

CERTAIN prisoners have left detailed accounts of the long days and nights passed between prison walls, but I cannot recall any description of their first sensations on seeing the dungeon door, which was henceforth to be the only connecting link between themselves and humanity. Whether it were of stone, wood, or metal, seems to have been of little account; yet to any one of an imaginative turn of mind, the sight of the terrible iron 'Yett' of Cawdor must have aroused the utmost sensations of hopeless despair.

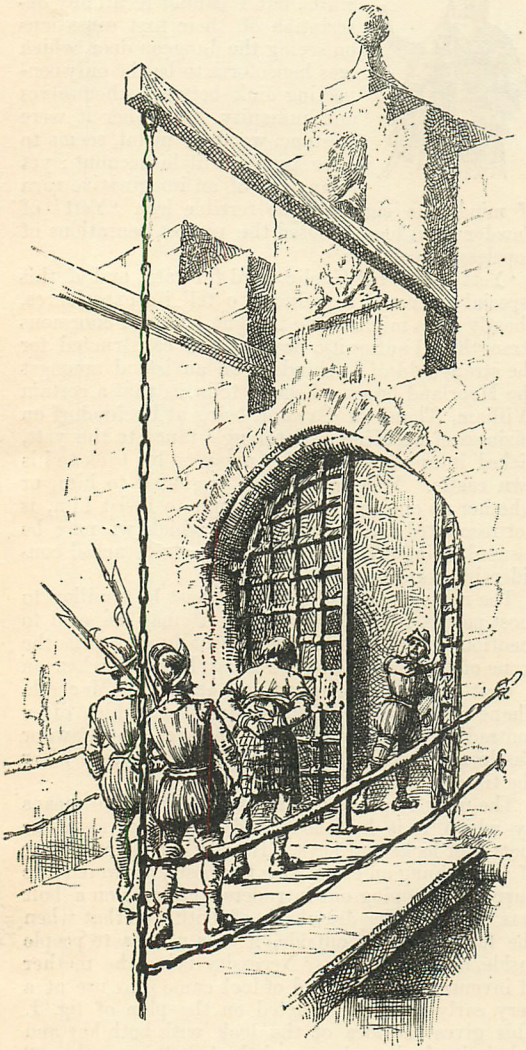
'Yett' is the old Gaelic word for gate, and if this especial one could be induced to tell its experiences, ghastly tales might come to light. It is of enormous strength and antiquity, having been constructed for the stronghold of Lochindorf, on an island amongst the Moorland braes. Legend tells us that a certain William, Thane of Cawdor, being at Lochindorf on business of his King, and taking a fancy to the yett, picked it up and carried it away on his back to his own castle. Whether it was presented to him, or whether no one was strong enough to resist him, is not recounted: the only point on which we may be assured being that his back must have ached considerably for some time afterwards.

The name 'Thane of Cawdor' must be familiar to most people, from *Macbeth*, but it may be well to mention that Cawdor Castle is usually said to be the scene of the murder of good King Duncan, when on a visit to the treacherous and ambitious Macbeth, Thane of Cawdor. History, however, which often contradicts popular tradition, declares that Cawdor Castle was not built for many hundred years after the time of Duncan.

The most important part of a door is the means by which it is kept shut, and this brings us to the matter of locks and keys. In very early times a bar of wood, hung on catches on the posts, answered the purpose of keeping out intruders, and later on a bolt was added. The drawback of both was that when the fastening was outside, it was useless to people inside, and *vice versâ*. 'Necessity being the mother of invention,' a rude kind of lock came into use at a very early date, constructed on the plan of fig. 1. This gives the idea of the lock with both key and bolt in it, the key above and the bolt below. Fig. 2 gives the action of the key upon the bolt. Two wooden pins (A and B), or tumblers, as they are called, fall from the key (at C and D) into holes in the bolt when the key is raised, and prevent the bolt from being withdrawn. When the lock is to be opened, the key is inserted and its handle pressed, so that the bolt is liberated and can be taken away. Two hands were required to arrange this simple matter, but it was a very long time before the fashion of this lock was superseded.

Nearly all the ancient locks have perished, being made of wood, but keys are found in all parts of the

world, and many are of most curious forms. The one in fig. 4, shaped like a sickle, was found in South Wales; that like a reversed S, in Sussex; and the one with the five standing-up teeth was fished up from the bottom of the Rhine. Many of the keys are of great size, and one of the old poets, in a hymn



The Yett of Cawdor.

to Ceres, tells us that the temple keys were carried on the shoulders of the priests. There is a verse in Isaiah (xxii. 22) confirming this practice, where the prophet, speaking of a highly honoured priest, says: 'The key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open.'

Keys are often found in graves, and when found on the left side of a skeleton in Anglo-Saxon countries, imply that it is the grave of a female. Old Scandinavian custom considered keys the badges of the lady of the house, who was said to be married

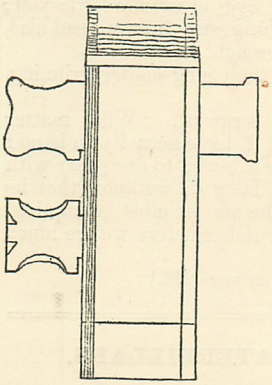


Fig. 1.—Old-fashioned Lock.

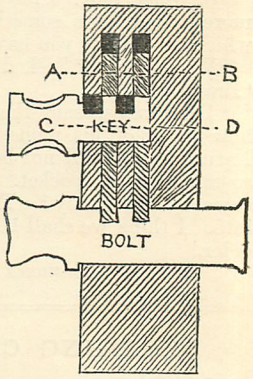


Fig. 2.—Section of Lock (reversed).

to locks and keys. In the middle ages, every housewife was expected to have two keys hanging from

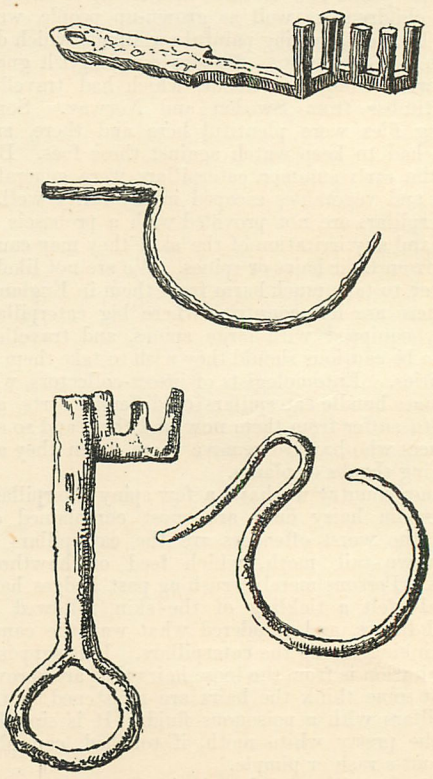


Fig. 4.—Various Old Keys.

her girdle, and, for the sake of the poor lady, we can only hope that they had shrunk, both in weight and size.

"The man-servant poured vile drugs down my throat."

NOBODY'S DOG.

(*Continued from page* 229.)

AT last the carriage in which I was stopped at a great noisy railway station. A man-servant met the lady, and carried me through the crowd after her. Among the people rushing about on the platform I saw many anxious, frightened-looking dogs, some led by porters, some sitting sadly beside heaps of luggage, as they had been told to do; others, again, straining at cords and chains, to get away from people who held them into the train, after beloved masters, vanishing out of sight, while they were left behind.

One of the dogs, sitting alone to wait, seemed to get more attention than the rest. Tied to his collar was a great white label, bearing the words, 'My name is Tommy; please give me some water.' Many a drink and a pat Tommy got in consequence, and I wondered why all dogs were not lucky enough to wear such labels.

After more rattle, bang, heat, steam, and noise than I ever remember hearing in my life before, my mistress and I found ourselves seated in a railway carriage. I believe she paid a man, with a gold band round his hat, extra money to have me sitting by her side. After a wild rush for some miles, while all the trees and houses went racing by our windows, we got out; then again into a carriage, with two horses, which began taking us along such a road as I never dreamt of.

It certainly was a road, for carriages and motor-cars, by hundreds, were passing all the while, so many that it seemed as if all the world were running a race, yet anything more unlike the road over the flat crofts could not be fancied. And where were all the trees gone, and the sky, what had become of that? Something seemed to have happened to the air, for it made me sneeze, and, though it was not evening, there was next to no light—the sweet, clear, mellow autumn sunset, I looked about for it in vain, and saw only a sickly glare, of a dirty yellow colour, on all sides.

By-and-by we stopped at a great house in a huge square. In the middle was a plot of frowsy-looking grass, reminding me of a large doormat, and a few flowers languished between sooty trees, that looked like sweeps' brushes. Crowds of sooty sparrows quarrelled and chirruped noisily in these, while spread over the whole dingy scene was the pea-soup-coloured canopy which Londoners call a sky, from one side of which loomed something round—the Londoners' sun—which resembled a slice of boiled carrot in the soup more closely than anything else I could think of.

This was a London square, under a London sky, and to breathe this pea-soup atmosphere under the boiled-carrot sun, my mistress, and thousands like her, turn their backs, year after year, upon the fresh fields, sweet breath of flowers, blue sky, and the health and beauty of their country homes.

I felt dull and heavy, and lost my strength and appetite—so did she; but for some reason we stayed on. In my London home I lived a life of luxury indeed, except that I craved always for air and light. There was cream and chicken, dainties of every kind, all day long; there was a pillow of down on the sofa, or a velvet carpet to lie on. I never heard a harsh word; all was softness—a life of sugar and kisses. I was groomed, too, each day, till my coat shone like a mixture of silver and gold, and my looks greatly changed for the better, though I felt my health and temper change for the worse. My new name was Darling. It was 'Darling, come here,' and 'Darling, don't go there,' till I was sick of the word.

I was always stuffing, but never felt honestly hungry; always sleepy, but never the fresher for my nap. Under the new treatment I became not only ill, but ill-tempered. London life was making a lazy, greedy, spiteful little cur of me—and it was not my fault. I pined, I craved for a good run, away from the close air of the sultry squares, the hot pavements, the stale, faint smell that seemed to fill the place, and room to stretch my limbs.

Alas! a stroll round the trodden turf of the square garden was all the run considered safe for me, or, at the best, a walk in the park, led by a servant, who held a chain linked to my collar, lest I should be lost or stolen. In vain I strained and tugged. 'Be quiet, Darling; you can't go loose,' the man or maid would say.

Oh, how I pitied the London dogs in that park! Dragged about at the will of their owners, or in the charge of hirelings and servants, who detested the task of 'exercising the dog,' and sometimes revenged themselves by thrashing the poor things, if they moved an inch beyond the regulation pace. I have seen dogs cruelly flogged by the unwilling persons hired to protect them, once out of their owners' sight.

Other dogs took matters differently, and dragged along the feeble old women, or young lads, holding their strings, just as they chose, making absurd and silly sights of aged ladies, at which clusters of rude children would mock and clap their hands. Altogether, the plight of London dogs recalled Stubby's wise words to me about the sorrows of town animals; and I thought they were little better off—diseased from overfeeding and want of exercise, and gasping for breath under the heavy sky—than Blarney, the mastiff at Crofton Court, or the poorest country dog I knew. Sorely I began to suffer under the treatment myself. I used to look out of the murky windows at the apology for daylight, and dream vaguely of the pure breeze coming over the crofts, and sicken for a free run.

I seldom felt hungry, and at last refused my meals, and then the man-servant—one of those terrible enemies of our race, who, without being vets, 'know all about dogs'—poured vile drugs down my throat, which tortured me and only made me worse. I became weaker and more ill in mind and body, and longed to snap at this man's hand when he brought out the horrible bottle.

My mistress called in the vet, and, when nobody was by, he said to me, 'A good run in the fields, without a string round your neck, would soon cure you, wouldn't it, sonnie?'

I looked up at him, and whined. But when my mistress came in he only took the money she gave him, and, leaving orders that I was to have no drugs but what he sent, departed to see other patients.

(*Continued on page* 245.)

TWO LITTLE BEAMS OF LIGHT.

THEY left the sun the self-same hour,
Two little beams of light:
One travelled to a drooping flower
And made it warm and bright;
One fell upon a bed of pain
Whereon a sick child lay,
And made him dream of health again,
And bless the cheering ray.

The flower took in the warmth and light,
And gave it back in scent;
A smile came on the face all white,
Healing and strength was lent.
Only two beams on light's swift wings,
That went as they were bid—
Only two tiny trembling things,
And yet how much they did!

CONNIE'S CAKE-MAKING.

'AUNT ALINE is coming to tea to-day,' said Mother, looking up from her letter.

Doris clapped her hands. 'Oh, Mother, may I make some little cakes for tea? You know Auntie promised us a treat when we had learnt to cook nicely.'

Mother looked grave. 'I think Connie must do the cake-making to-day,' she said quietly. 'The last time you were having a lesson, you remember, Cook complained that you girls would not take the trouble to do things properly, and so her cakes were not at all nice.'

Doris pouted. 'Currants are nasty sticky things to pick,' she said. 'But I would do them properly this time, Mother. Please let me.'

'No, dear, not until you take the trouble to learn properly,' she said firmly. 'Connie, you may get your cooking apron, and come down to the kitchen with me presently.'

So very soon after, Connie was standing on a little stool before the big kitchen table, carefully mixing together flour and butter in a big pastry-bowl. Her cheeks were flushed with excitement, but she looked rather worried, too, for these were the first cakes she had made quite by herself,

'Oh, dear,' she said, 'I have forgotten the peel. I must ask Mother for the store-cupboard keys,' and she hurried out of the room.

A moment later Doris came in looking rather cross, and feeling it, too. She glanced round the kitchen: Cook was not there, otherwise she would not have ventured further. As it was, she crept to the table, and looked at the array of good things.

'I could do it just as well as Connie,' she said to herself, as she opened some of the packages to see what they contained. Then she pulled the lid off a tin.

'Salt,' she said, and at that instant a sudden thought came to her. Without waiting to consider how naughty she was, Doris tipped nearly half the white, powdery contents of the tin into the cake-bowl, and hastily stirred the mixture. Then, hearing footsteps, she hid the tin behind some others on the dresser, so that Connie would not notice how much had gone, and she herself was safely out of the kitchen before Connie came back. The little cook did not notice that the tin had gone, or did not need it, for she made no search, but carefully mixed in the fruit, peel, eggs, and the other nice things that make cakes so good to eat.

But when tea-time came, instead of the tempting cakes Mother and Aunt Aline expected to see, a very woe-begone little maid entered the drawing-room.

'I'm so sorry,' she faltered, 'but there is no use bringing the cakes in: they are all spoilt.'

Doris, whose conscience had been making her feel very unhappy all the afternoon, kept her eyes fixed on the ground.

'Spoilt?' said Mother. 'Why, how's that, Connie?'

'I—I forgot to put any sugar in,' said Connie, half in tears. 'I know I got the tin out, but I am sure I never put any sugar into the cake. I'm so sorry, Aunt Aline.'

'And I am, too, dear,' said Aunt Aline. 'Have you tasted them? No? Well, bring them in, and let's see if they are as bad as you think.'

So Connie brought in the result of her morning's work.

'Well, they *look* very nice,' declared Mother, taking one of the beautifully-baked cakes. Then she tasted it.

'Why, Connie, you have been dreaming! They are delicious, and quite sweet enough.'

Aunt Aline ate one, and quite agreed with Mother; so did Connie. Doris, more surprised than any one else, found them as good as they looked.

'But I know I didn't put the sugar in,' protested Connie. 'I didn't even open the tin.'

'Was it—was it a round tin?' asked Doris.

'Yes.'

'Oh-h, I thought it was salt!' said Doris, half to herself; then, seeing Mother looking rather stern and questioning, she began to cry. It was a long time before they solved the mystery of the sugar, but at last they managed to get the whole story, and very grave did it make Mother and Aunt Aline. But Doris was so truly sorry, and Connie so anxious that her sister should not be punished, that Mother promised not to scold her.

'I was careless, too, Mother,' said Connie. 'I ought to have remembered the sugar, even if the tin wasn't there.'

'Well,' said Aunt Aline, 'I think we had better leave that treat until another time, children. I will come to tea again one of these days, and then we will see if you cannot both make some nice cakes, with everything in.'

And Connie and Doris must have been very careful next time, for quite soon after Connie's unlucky cake-making, two happy little girls spent a long day with Aunt Aline, at the Zoo.

'DO YOUR BEST.'

VIKING is a big black retriever, almost as well known to his master's patients as the busy doctor himself. Calling by appointment one day, a lady found the doctor from home. She sat down on a couch to await the doctor's return. In a moment Viking crossed the room and politely held out his big black paw. Much amused, the lady responded to the invitation to 'shake hands,' and, with his head apologetically on one side, at short intervals Viking shook hands again and again some twenty times or more. At length the doctor's step was heard, and, with a sigh of satisfaction, which said as plainly as any words, 'I did my duty! I tried to make her welcome! I did my best while you were out, dear master!' Viking mounted the couch, and composed himself to rest.

"Viking politely held out his paw."

"The male arrived and renewed his onslaught."

THE LONG-TAILED WIDOW-BIRD.

THE Long-tailed Widow-bird is a singular little fellow in more ways than one. To begin with, he only assumes his brilliant black plumage and long tail in spring, retaining them throughout the greater part of summer, whilst at other seasons a brownish or khaki plumage and a short tail are worn. During the latter period he reverts to the every-day habits of an ordinary bird, and, indeed, few but an expert could tell that he is a 'widow' at all. However, he quite makes up for his lowly position in life when the spring-time comes, when he dons his lustrous ebony apparel and goes forth in search of some eight or ten females of his own species, appointing himself their lord and master. This change in colour of plumage only applies to the male bird. The female has to content herself with feathers of a tawny hue at all times.

When the male has collected the desired number of wives, he selects a suitable patch — usually amongst reeds—for them to build their nests in, whilst he takes up a commanding position on top of the highest reed, showing off his beautiful tail to the best possible advantage, and driving off any other male bird bold enough to approach the nest. He is a born fighter, and fears nothing; even when the terrible hawk hovers directly overhead, ever on the look-out for victims, and when all other birds have wisely sought cover, the male widow-bird remains exposed on his perch, indifferent to the danger, and, strange to say, the hawk, for some unknown reason, never molests him.

On one occasion the writer had an excellent opportunity of witnessing the prowess and cleverness of these birds. In this instance a Butcher-bird, or Shrike, by means of flitting stealthily from reed to reed, approached quite near to the widow-bird's settlement, and was just in the act of pouncing upon one of the female members, who had incautiously strayed some little distance from home, when the male, from his observation-post, saw the movement, and hastened to the rescue. Despite the fact that the butcher-bird is stronger and much more ferocious, the male widow swooped down on him, and at once engaged in a deadly strife. The attack was so sudden, and delivered with such force, that he managed to knock the butcher flat on his back, and immediately followed up the advantage by pinning him by the throat. In vain did the savage butcher struggle for mastery; no impression could be made against his doughty antagonist. At length, with a tremendous effort, he succeeded in disengaging himself, and contrived to retreat, pursued by the victor; but, owing to the unwieldy length of his tail, the widow-bird was unable to catch up, and it looked very much like the butcher making good his escape, when suddenly all the wives, who had hitherto been mere spectators, with one accord sallied forth in pursuit. Rapidly outdistancing their husband, they forged ahead, and soon caught up to the fugitive butcher, whom they attacked fiercely, forcing him to the ground, and keeping him thus until the male arrived and renewed his onslaught. Thrice was this repeated; the butcher endeavoured to escape three times, and on each occasion was pursued and checked by the females, until eventually the male widow-bird succeeded in slaying him.

On another occasion a cat, renowned for being an inveterate enemy of rats, was seen scampering back to her home, with hair erect and eyes almost protruding from her head, closely pursued by two male and over a dozen female widow-birds. What the cat had been up to was hard to guess, but probably, like the butcher-bird, it had tried to secure one of the females for breakfast, and was instead set upon by the others; anyhow, it came back a very sorry-looking cat, and promptly sought refuge underneath a bed. For several days, one or other, and sometimes both, of the male birds hovered near the house, but nothing would induce Pussy to go out, except under cover of darkness.

HOW THE SEASONS CHANGE.

I HAVE climbed the grassy hillside:
The last time I was there,
It wore a snow-white overcoat
Without a single tear;
But now it's worn to tatters
By winds on mischief bent;
And see, the old hill's shoulder
Is sticking through the rent.

The river in the valley
Cried gaily as I passed:
'Yon hill's white coat of winter
Is coming off at last.
December bade him wear it
In roaring tones and plain,
Yet April scarcely whispers
When off it comes again.'

The woods, the hills, the valleys,
Are full of hope and cheer,
For every moment tells us
That spring is drawing near.
And spring will call the swallow,
The swallow call the rose,
And day by day the year awakes
From winter's long repose.

AN ILLEGAL BANQUET.

'THERE'S a hamper for you, Ruggles,' said Bates; 'shall I help you to take it up to your study?'

Ruggles accepted the offer, but without much show of gratitude, well knowing what the favour meant. 'Yes, come on,' he said.

The two boys carried up the hamper, and the delightful occupation of unpacking it began at once. While the strings were as yet uncut, there came a timid knock at the door.

'Want a knife, Ruggles?' said a voice.

'Got one,' replied the hero of the hamper; 'but come in, Seely.'

'Want a plate or two for cakes and things?' asked another voice, almost immediately.

'Come in if it's you, Smithson,' said Ruggles. There was no further allusion to plates.

'You can have my big biscuit tin if you like, Ruggles,' said a fifth aspirant for some of the good things, as yet outside the walls of the banqueting chamber. And the lord of the banquet, addressing the hungry one as Stedway, bade him enter.

Lastly came another voice.

'Ruggles, I'm sorry I called you a cad, and said I believed your uncle was a cat's-meat man,' it said. 'Can I come in and make friends?'

'No,' shouted Ruggles, with his mouth full, 'you can stay out.'

The voice was silent for a moment or two.

'You might give a fellow a bit of cake,' it said, somewhat less confidently, a little later, but answer came there none, only the sound of munching and of the crackling of paper; exclamations, such as 'Is it strawberry or goosegogs?' and so on.

The disappointed Mitford stayed to listen. Perhaps Ruggles would relent. Mitford was prepared to swallow any amount of snubbing, so long as he might have cake with it. Presently Mitford heard conversation within, and he listened. This, of course, was not honourable or 'good form,' but Mitford did not care.

'You chaps can all come to the dormitory to-night at ten,' he heard Ruggles say; 'of course Smithson and Bates belong. Seely, you and Stedway can dodge your prefect, can't you?'

'We can try!' replied Seely, and Stedway exclaimed, as well as a mouthful of biscuit and strawberry jam would permit him, 'Rather!'

'I'm not going to ask that sneak Mitford,' continued Ruggles. 'He was awfully caddish to me yesterday, and now, as soon as he hears I have got a hamper, he wants to make up. Rotten, I call it.'

Ruggles's guests all called it 'rotten' also. They spoke of Mitford, as the occasion demanded, in terms of loathing and dislike. At a banquet, it is polite to agree, as far as possible, with the lord of the feast, and here, even while one feast was in progress, a second was being arranged.

Mitford's heart grew heavy within him. Anger and jealousy filled him, and drove out all thoughts of honour and honesty. He then and there devised and determined upon a course of action which, he imagined, would land these five hateful beings in an awkward scrape. He went to his study and wrote as follows:

'*To* CHRISTOPHER ROWE, ESQ.,
Head Master, Upton House.

'DEAR SIR,—Ruggles and we others are having a little supper-party in my dormitory at 10 o'clock to-night, because it is my birthday, and I have got a hamper, and we venture to hope you will oblige us by joining the feast. We know it is rather cheek, but we hope you will not mind.—Yours truly,

'RUGGLES, STEDWAY, SMITHSON, BATES, SEELY.'

At ten that evening, the gas having been put out, Ruggles lighted a candle, and three pyjama-clad conspirators sprang lightly out of bed and began to arrange the feast. Two associates in crime joined them from dormitory No. 2. There were biscuits and cakes, there were two kinds of jam, and a pot of ginger; there was tongue and a box of sardines, there were two bottles of ginger-pop. 'Isn't it simply sublime!' was the general opinion. But at ten past ten, when the feast was in full swing, a nerve-destroying thing occurred. There came a sudden knock at the door, and in walked Mr. Rowe, the head master, candle in hand.

There was a scuffle, and in a single moment Stedway was under Smithson's bed; Seely, seated on the same bed, tried—but quite vainly—to shrink into nothing. Bates, sitting in the full blaze of candle-light, started up, but sat down again. Ruggles, carving a tongue, sat as one turned into stone.

'Good evening, boys,' said Mr. Rowe. 'This is indeed kind of you. I will thank you for a bit of that tongue, Ruggles; many happy returns of the day, by the bye. Biscuits and butter, please, Smithson—thank you. Stedway, come out from under that bed, please; I should like to see more of one of my hosts than his heels. It was so good of you to invite me to your supper-party, Ruggles.'

Mr. Rowe had sat down upon the bed and was eating heartily.

Ruggles, feeling that he was a creature speaking and acting in a dream, did his best to reply. After an attempt or two he blurted out, 'Please, sir, I didn't.'

'Ah, well, well, let us finish our supper, and we can discuss that by-and-by. Another slice of tongue, please, and another biscuit, Smithson. You are not half eating, boys; don't be shy on my account. Do you think we shall win the Junior Football Cup, Ruggles?'

The five boys did their best to eat and drink, and to converse, but there was a sense of unreality in the thing, as of a velvet glove that hid a mailed hand or perhaps grasped the handle of a cane.

Mr. Rowe finished his supper and stood up.

'Well, good-night, boys,' he said, 'and thank you for a very excellent supper. By the bye, Ruggles, what have you done to Mitford to induce him to play you so mean a trick? I thought my invitation was in his writing, and since you say you yourself did not invite me, I am sure of it.'

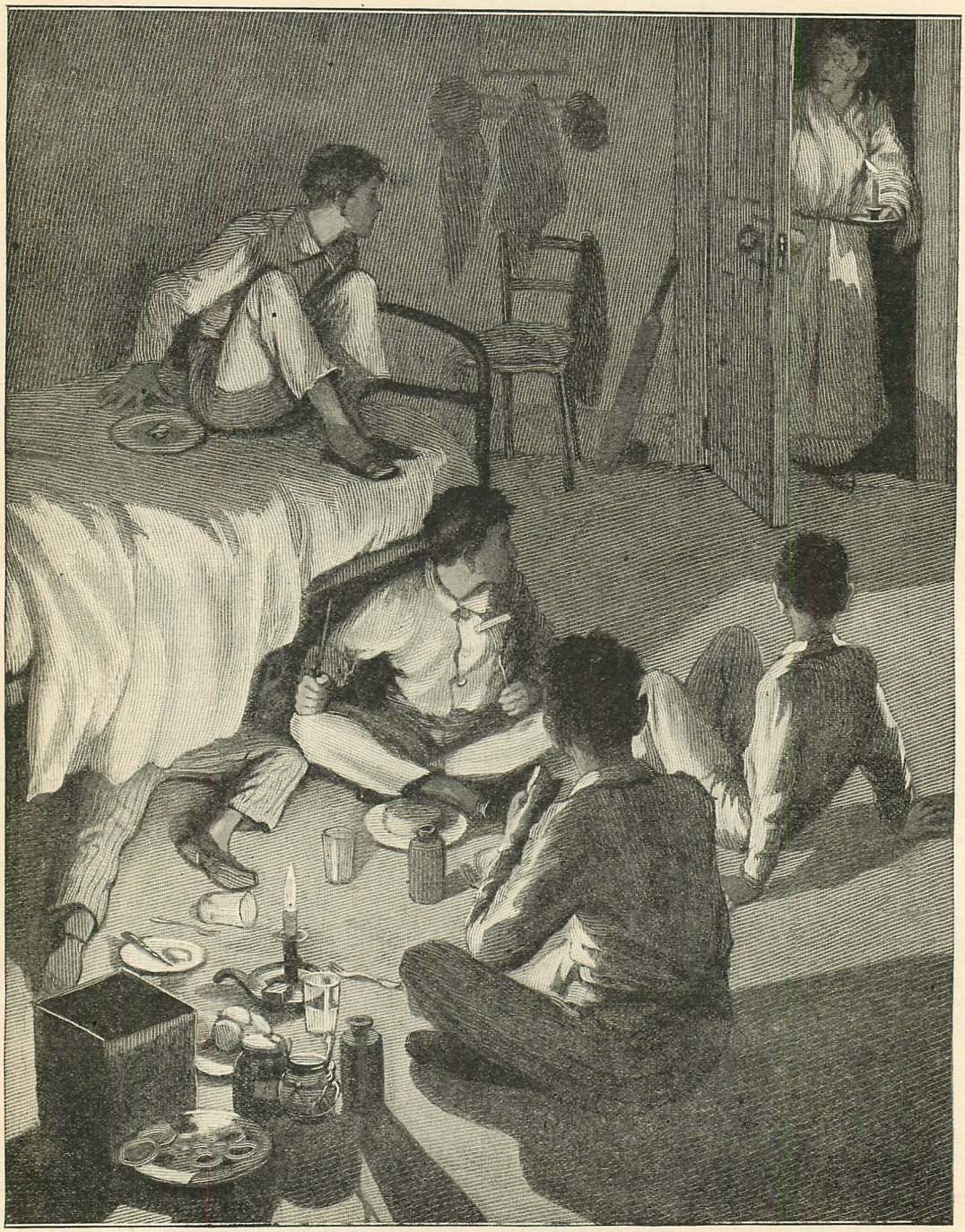
A half-uttered exclamation rose to the lips of each boy present; Ruggles flushed with indignation.

'We had quarrelled, sir,' he said, 'and so, when he asked me for a piece of cake, I refused it. Besides, I don't like people who ask.'

'I see. You are quite convinced, I hope, that—well—that I was actually invited, and have not, so to speak, *cadged* a supper from you?'

Ruggles was inclined to smile, but Mr. Rowe seemed quite serious. 'Oh, yes, sir!' he said.

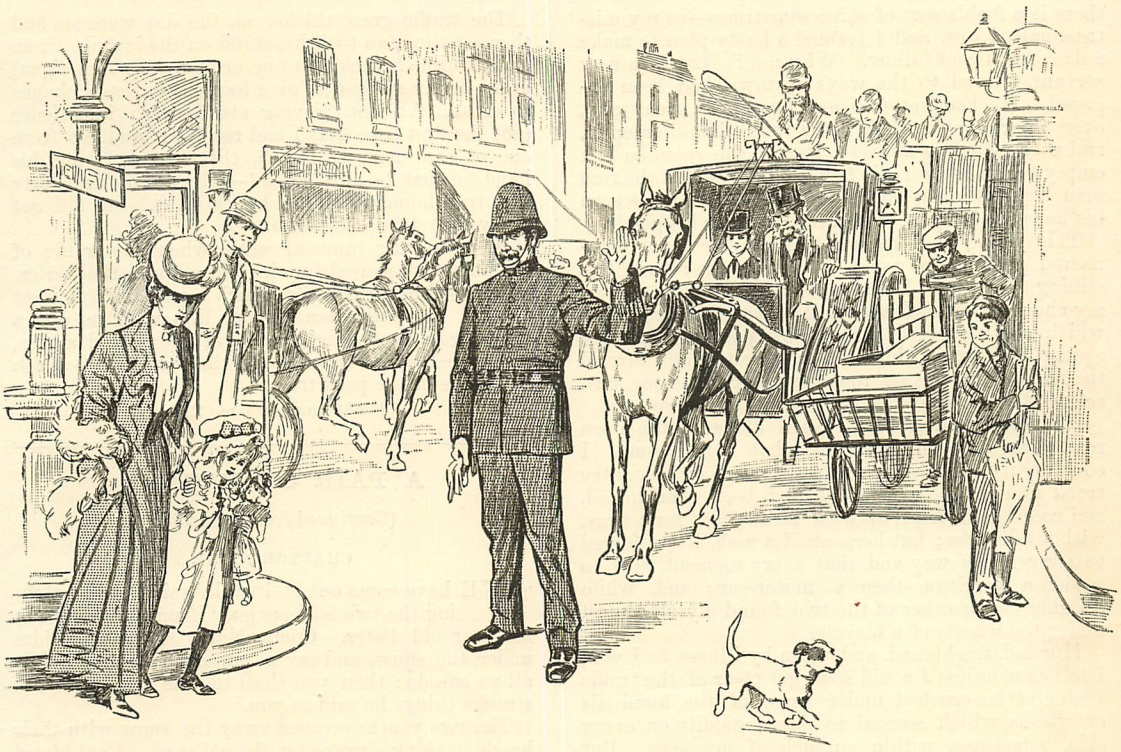
'Thanks. Well, boys, I'm afraid I must ask you to write me out, say, fifty lines each for this breach of the rules; I can't very well let it pass, you see. You are not to know, please, that Mitford played this trick upon you; I shall deal with Mitford; and when I have done with him, you are to regard the matter as closed. I cannot prevent you speaking of what has happened to-night, though I should prefer that you did not. This is not to be considered a precedent; the next time I am invited to an *illegal*



"In walked the Head Master, candle in hand."

banquet—well, it will not be a matter of fifty lines! Now get to bed, all—good-night.'

'And he never whacked us,' wrote Ruggles to his mother. 'Isn't he a brick? We are not to let Mitford know that we know, but we are all going to kick him, and if he guesses from that, we can't help it!'

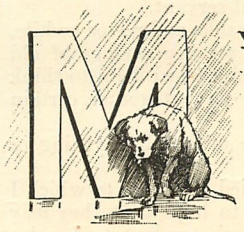


"The policeman held out his hand so that I might cross in safety."

NOBODY'S DOG.

(*Continued from page* 238.)

CHAPTER X.



My mistress had little time to spare for me, and I was seldom long in her company. The same iron law which dragged her from the country each year to live under the peasoup-and-boiled-carrot sky, seemed to ordain that she should always be busy, yet never doing anything. Whenever she saw me she had a kind look and word, but she was generally on the rush somewhere, and when at home too tired to notice anything.

Meeting me one day on the stairs—for indoors I was allowed to run loose—she tapped me playfully with an open letter she held in her hand. 'If you could read this letter, little doggie,' she said to me, 'I am sure you would be pleased to know that your poor little friends at the Dogs' Home are in the care of kind folks, and that only the very day we left, that mournful, forsaken collie was fetched away by his mistress in tears of joy. She had somehow lost him on her journey. It will make me more careful when I am travelling next time. The poor collie, after running beside the train till he dropped, was found on the line, and taken to the Dogs' Home. What a useful place! How I wish we had one in every town for such as you.'

I jumped up to lick her face in return for this long speech. Every dog's heart swells with pride at being talked to, even when he does not understand what it is all about.

Though I never felt lively and well at that time, and often yawned and stretched in a complaining manner, I should have felt sorry indeed had I known that day on the staircase that I should never talk with my kind protectress again.

She had on her head at the time a thing which they call a bonnet. Now, I always was fond of amusing myself by watching the ways of men and women. A good deal may be found out about what is going to happen next by taking note of such trifles as bonnets, boots, hats, walking-sticks, newspapers, books, pens, &c. For instance, a newspaper generally means an armchair by the fireside, or a cosy seat at the window. Pens and ink mean a letter, and sometimes a run to the post. A hat may mean almost anything out of doors, but a bonnet generally, if not always, means a carriage. Accordingly, when I saw it on my mistress' head, I looked round to see the glass door in the hall open, and a footman standing ready to open the street-door outside, where I could hear the horses jingling their harness, impatient to start.

A gleam of sunshine twinkled—for even in London

there is a feeble sort of shine sometimes—as my mistress passed out, and I formed a hasty plan to make a dash for it and follow. Why not? Lately a new servant, unused to the ways of town, had been engaged. He had yet to learn how, in a great city, every door must be shut, lest a thief should creep in, and every window fastened, should the room be left empty for an instant—in fact, that in London the rich man lives inside a handsome prison, and must turn his house into a jail, if he means to keep his goods.

This young countryman lingered for a few moments, perhaps to get a whiff of air rather less stifling than usual, before shutting the door. I saw my chance. Away I went full pelt after the carriage, which was now going at a tidy pace through the square, and turning into a long street which skirted the park. The servant ran a few steps after me, but, seeing the case hopeless, went back to the house.

No sooner did I find myself alone in the open road than I began to repent what I had done. I could easily have overtaken the carriage on a country track like those to which I had been accustomed, and could have kept up with it, at least for a time, without distress; but here, amid a mob, I was forced to swerve this way and that every moment, now to avoid a carriage, then a motor-car; and, while dodging one or other of the two, found myself almost under the wheels of a bicycle.

Hurried, frightened, and worn by illness as I was, I felt that unless I could soon get clear of the traffic I should be crushed under some of the hundreds of wheels which seemed to dance giddily on every side, sometimes within an inch of my nose. But how to get out of the living, moving stream?

Fortunately, as I ran, I came to a small, round stone island, in the middle of the wide road. In the centre of this stood a large lamp-post, and—joyful surprise!—there was a drinking-trough, too, with an iron cup chained to it. Out of this a cabman was drinking, while his hot, thirsty horse refreshed himself, and underneath was a small, cool stone basin for dogs. An angel must have put it there. Beautiful pigeons were sipping and cooling themselves at this merciful pool, and little dusty sparrows bathed, and seemed more sprightly. I, too, drank and was refreshed; and if a cheerful look, and a wag of the tail, and a sigh of relief from a jaded creature can recompense the loving soul who placed the fountain there, I certainly gave all these.

A little crowd of people stood side by side on this refuge, till there should be a turn in the ever-flowing tide of vehicles which would allow them to pass over to the opposite pavement. One by one, as they saw a chance, each of these made a dash to the other side; this I felt afraid to do. In too much anxiety of mind to lie down and rest, I ran round and round the island, afraid to follow any stranger, though I looked up into the faces of many. In them I read thought, care, hardness, trouble, worry, love of self—sometimes love of others of their own race, but never love of me. Not one face softened, no one's eyes look down in pity into mine. I was lost. There was an end of it. All hope of reaching Luke, of overtaking the carriage, or of finding my way back to any place I had ever known, was drowned in the great sea of unknown forms which spread around.

The traffic grew thicker as the day wore on, and then a policeman took his stand on the island. From time to time he held out one arm, and at this signal every driver stopped to give foot-passengers a chance to cross. At last, pitying my feverish impatience (not the first time that I had received kindness from one of the 'men in blue'), this man held out his hand, so that I—only a dog!—might cross in safety and trot homewards, as he thought. He did not know that I was homeless.

A wondering murmur arose when the traffic of the huge city paused for the sake of a little terrier, but a good-natured smile, which began on the honest face of the policeman, spread like wildfire, and a laugh arose as I quietly and gravely trotted across, and seated myself in safety on the curbstone beneath the shade of the park trees.

(*Continued on page* 250.)

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 235.)

CHAPTER XXVII.

'WE have come out of it well,' said Paul, watching the two soldiers go, 'if only it were not for dear old Peter. Come, Mark, let us bury him under the snow, and say a prayer over him—it is all we can do; then you shall tell me again of those strange things he said to you.'

The two youths scraped away the snow with their hands, making a grave for the old man. Paul kissed his faithful old servant. 'Good-bye, Peter,' he said; 'and may God be merciful to you, as you have served me well on earth!' Then they placed him in the hole they had made, and covered him with snow. With their knives they cut a rough plank of pine-wood, and, smoothing a place in the centre, Paul wrote Peter's name and the day of his death, adding, 'Well done, good and faithful servant.'

Then they entered the shalashka and rested awhile, and the Eagle repeated the strange sayings of old Peter, mysterious words which caused Paul to think silently and deeply, and to piece together certain ideas which he had formed.

'Well, what do you make of it all, anything or nothing?' asked the Eagle.

'I have certain ideas,' replied Paul, 'as to which I hardly like to allow myself to hope that they may one day prove correct. Peter's conduct to-day, his mysterious words, his amazement when he made a certain discovery—your quoting that little bit of English poetry, you remember—all these things go towards encouraging me in a great hope, and yet I hardly dare believe it possible.'

'You puzzle me,' said poor Oriol; 'I cannot tell what you are driving at. Give me a little more light, Paul.'

Paul was silent awhile, thinking deeply. 'Well, I will tell you what occurred to me,' he said. 'I think I told you that I once had a twin of the name of Mark.'

'Yes, I know that; go on,' said the Eagle, breathlessly.

'Who was eaten, or supposed to be eaten, by

wolves. Anyway, he disappeared in the forest, having run away from his nurses, and was never found. My mother and I continued for years to hope that the belief that he was caught and eaten by wolves was wrong; but since he never turned up, our hopes grew faint. Now I come to my own ideas as to what poor old Peter intended to convey to my mother by his mysterious message. Do not blame me if our hopes should be disappointed. You do not remember, of course, how you came to the village which was afterwards your home. Maybe we shall obtain one day valuable information from the man who acted as father to you for so many years. Meanwhile we have certain peculiar facts: you are so like me as to be remarkable; you remember a little English, which is my mother's native language; you have a scar upon your shoulder which might possibly have been caused by the teeth of a wolf. Peter, I fancy, saw this scar, and setting this and that together—our likeness one to the other, and so forth—came to the conclusion that you are none other than my brother Mark.'

'Oh,' exclaimed the Eagle, flushing red with delight, 'if only it were so!'

'Yes, if only it were so!' echoed Paul. 'Search back in your memory, Mark—I will call you that in token of the great hope that has been born in my heart—search in your memory. Is there nothing that you can remember of your childhood?'

Mark sighed.

'I have often done so. If I were really your brother, and therefore your equal in rank, an aristocrat and so forth, I should, of course, have been born and brought up in a palace or grand house, and of such a thing I have no recollection. I fear I have always been but a peasant, and that the likeness between us is accidental. I remember neither grand house nor grand clothes, but sometimes I seem to recall the face of an old woman who wheeled a barrow upon which I sat; this is probably imagination—a fancy fostered by my father (the Starost of the village, I mean, who always declared that he was not really my father). He frequently questioned me about some old woman who was supposed to have brought me to the village.'

'Well, but that in itself is most interesting,' said Paul. 'If only you could remember how you came to be with the old woman, don't you see how well this might fit in with the great hope we both feel? She may have found you wandering lost in the wood; she would have picked you up as a matter of course.'

'And have taken me to your father's mansion, without doubt,' sighed the Eagle; 'not carried me far away.'

'She might have been a stranger to the place, you see.'

'But surely there would have been a hue and cry for one so precious as the child of the Manor-lord? Your mother, who was, you say, nearly heartbroken by the loss of her son, would have left no stone unturned to find him. No, Paul, I dare not hope too much.'

'There would have been a search, of course,' said Paul, 'and, as you say, my mother would not have been satisfied very easily. If there had been any talk of an old woman with a barrow, such as you describe, we may be sure she would have sifted the matter most carefully. We must leave things as they are, Mark, until we can interview the old Starost, your foster-father; maybe he will be able to throw light upon the mystery. Meanwhile we will be as though it were proved that we are brothers. I have a strange sympathy towards you. Whether it is simply that we are alike, or that we are fellow-sufferers, I cannot tell, but there the feeling is, and it is a strong one.'

'I have it also, and very strongly,' said Mark with emotion. 'I dare not hope that we are brothers, for that would be too much happiness; but I have never felt for another as I feel towards you, Paul, and that is simple truth.'

'Old Peter was most anxious that it should be so, and so it shall be,' said Paul, 'though there are many mysterious words of his which I suppose we shall never fully understand. He spoke as though he had greatly sinned against my mother in some strange way. What could he have meant?'

The Eagle could offer no explanation.

'I will tell you what I have thought,' continued Paul. 'The idea has occurred to me since you mentioned the old woman. At the time of your disappearance (I prefer to assume that it was you), Peter was already head keeper or huntsman to my father. When you disappeared, Peter was instructed to search the forest far and wide, and I suppose he did search it. He is said to have failed to find any trace of you, except for the fact that he saw signs of wolves, hence the rumour that you were killed and eaten by wolves. Now, it has occurred to me that Peter, rather than confess to the Countess that he had failed to find you, and that possibly you might have wandered into some by-path, where you had been picked up by a tramp, invented the story of the wolf-tracks, hoping that presently he would happen upon some news of the lost child, in which case he would reap much credit and profit. The fact that my poor mother had suffered deeply meanwhile would only enhance the value of the service rendered when the child should be found and restored. Do you follow me?'

'It seems to be a matter which one could never prove, anyway,' said the Eagle, 'since Peter is dead. He certainly said I was to tell the Countess to forgive him when she learned what she must learn one day. It may be as you say. I pray with all my heart that it may be so.'

'Well, the first thing is to escape out of this confounded country, full of spies and soldiers set to entrap us!' said Paul, smiling. 'The rest will all come one day, Mark. Now, do you know, I am as tired as a dog, and I simply *must* sleep. Could you keep awake, think you, for, say, three hours, and watch? If so, I will lie down and have a nap, and afterwards you shall have your turn.'

The Eagle was dead tired also, but he cheerfully agreed to take first watch. He would have done a good deal more than that for Paul's sake; indeed, if he had been suddenly asked to lay down his life for him, he would gladly have done so, for he felt, as he had confessed, a wonderful and mysterious sense of love and devotion for the young Count.

(*Continued on page* 254.)

"'Good-bye, Peter,' he said."

"'My pigs never say grace.'"

SAY YOUR GRACE.

AN old farmer was once invited out to dinner, and, before beginning to eat, reverently said grace.

'How old-fashioned you are, sir!' sneered a young man. 'I suppose in your parts every one says grace?'

'Not every one,' said the old farmer, gravely. 'I have some remarkably fine pigs on my farm. But I suppose they are new-fashioned. Though I feed them remarkably well, and they are well cared for, my pigs never say grace.'

PUZZLERS FOR WISE HEADS.

8.—English Poets.

Enigmatically expressed.

1. Cabbage of all sorts, and a long crest.
2. A crustaceous animal, or a wild fruit, and to exist.
3. The mark of a graduate's degree.
4. A hard outer covering, and two vowels.
5. To depress with fear, and an alkaline solution.

[*Answers on page* 282.] C. J. B.

Answers to Puzzle on page 211.

7.—1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
Eye.	Two.	Hand.	Bus.	Cold.
Eve.	Too.	Band.	But.	Hold.
Are.	Tot.	Bond.	Bat.	Held.
Arm.	Tit.	Fond.	Cat.	Head.
	Fit.	Food.	Cab.	Heat.
	Fix.	Foot.		
	Six.			

THE WIND OF SEPTEMBER.

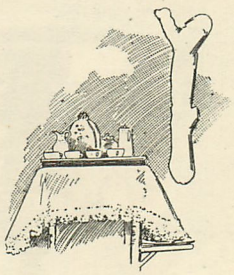
'AH, this shall be mine!' sighed the wind of September,
And snatched at a rose on a spray;
'I *must* take a relic to help me remember
The summer that's passing away.'
But oh! how it scattered the delicate petals,
And laughingly chased them with rain,
To drop them at last in a bed of wild nettles
That grew at the side of a lane!

Then, petulant still, to a forest it fluttered,
And set all the branches a-swing;
'These leaves shall be mine,' it exultantly muttered,
'As tokens of summer and spring.'
And reaping the boughs with invisible sickle,
It gathered the harvest of gold;
But the wind of September is dreadfully fickle,
Nor long to one purpose will hold.

On roadway and meadow it scattered the treasures,
Unheeding wherever they fell,
Then hurried away in search of new pleasures,
And plenty of mischief as well.
And the sun as it set seemed to whisper: 'I never!
To think that I've lingered to find
That my leaf and my rose have been scattered for ever
As toys of that petulant wind.'

NOBODY'S DOG.

(*Continued from page* 246.)



WAS glad to be out of the hurly-burly, though alone, and beginning to feel greatly in need of food. On glancing back at the dangerous street, I was not surprised at seeing, stretched out in the gutter, the body of a little fox-terrier, killed by some passing wheel.

The scavengers came and took him away, and I was his chief mourner. Must not I, too, end in some such dismal way? It seemed likely. And yet what loving-kindness had put that refreshing water on the stony island in the core of cruel London? What had caused the stern policeman to pity me, and make a way for my tiny feet through the crowd of lofty men? Perhaps that same loving-kindness would help me now.

I plucked up my spirits, gave myself a good shake, and, with as jaunty an air as I could put on, went boldly into the park to beg.

Many people were here enjoying themselves, and among them I was glad to see many children; also, in one place, little tables were spread with white cloths, near which they were seated, eating all manner of nice things. I must say that I got as much as I could hold of biscuits, buns, and other goodies, and after that lay down for a nap under the trees, with my nose on my paws. At this very moment I heard—believe me or not, as you like—rising clear and sweet above the rattle of the great highway, the sound of a flute. It fell; it soared upward again, now like the warble of a blackbird, next like the coo of a dove; then it rose like a skylark on the wing; lastly it dropped soothingly into the well-known air which used to tell the village that old Piping Pat was wandering home after one of his long tramps. 'Home, home, home, sweet home!' there could be no mistake about the tune, which always made old Stubby howl aloud. And who but Piping Pat could so mock the birds?

Springing to my feet, I looked about. Oh, if only I could find Pat!

But the sound of the flute stopped. I had been helped by the music, whether it was a dream or really true. If Pat was indeed near, how could I hope to find him? I gave up the idea, and lay down again. Though there were men in the park whose business was to watch everybody and everything, none of them took any notice of me, thinking, I suppose, that I belonged to some one there. I slept, and on waking again found two of these park-keepers standing over me. They were the only figures to be seen; the pleasure-seekers had all gone home, and the gates were now to be shut.

'Whose dog is this?' said one to the other.

'Don't know. He is lost, I suppose. Chuck him out. I can't be bothered with him. He belongs to nobody.'

Picking me up, he carried me a little way under

one arm, pitched me out into the road, shut the gates with a clang, and locked them behind me.

Again I was crouching on the curbstone near the place from which they had carried the little fox-terrier. The streets were full of light and of bustling people, a dazzling, bewildering maze. Then it began to pour with rain. Cabs rumbled over the shiny road; inside them I could see people sitting dry and cosy, going their smiling way to places of amusement or to pleasant homes. A chill came over the air; I shivered, and went to sit on the doorstep of a grand palace, but the servant, showing two fine gentlemen out, kicked me out of their way. Next I hid myself in the black shadow of a stone porch, but an errand-boy spied me and chased me away.

I seemed to have no business anywhere that night. Without a friend, drenched with rain, shuddering with cold and misery, I felt through the long dark hours the bitterness of being *nobody's dog*.

(*Continued on page* 259.)

A NOVEL MOUSETRAP.

TWO or three oysters were not long ago put away in an earthen pan. During the night a couple of young mice found out the dainty dish and inserted their mouths within the open shells. In the morning they were found fast held by the closed shells of the oyster, and, of course, quite dead. The oyster continued its firm hold on the intruders, and the trio were properly preserved, and can still be seen in the museum at Whitstable.

SOME OF NATURE'S MARVELS.

VI.—PLANTS OR ANIMALS?

THE world of living things is divided into two great kingdoms—the animal and the vegetable. As a rule there is no difficulty in distinguishing those that belong to the one from those that belong to the other. No one, for example, is likely to mistake an ape for an apple-tree! But though the line may be drawn readily enough in most cases, this is by no means so easy when the more lowly forms of plants and animals come to be examined. And the difficulty increases as we approach nearer to the lowliest forms in each kingdom, until finally even the wisest of us has to leave the matter an open question.

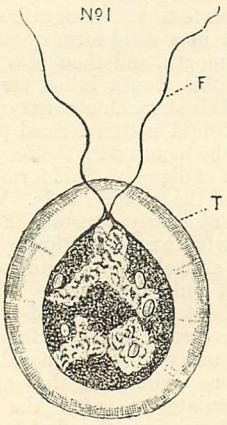
How is this indecision to be accounted for? Briefly, because the simplest living things known were minute creatures of exceedingly simple structure; they were just living bodies—little blobs of jelly—microscopic in size, and only gradually did they assume, and perfect, the attributes of vegetable and animal bodies. Some, even to this day, have failed to advance at all, and retain the primitive characters of their ancestors of ages past: just as, among a number of boys and girls at school, some are dull and make no progress, while others grow up to become famous men and women.

But the earliest signs of the parting between the plant and the animal are shown, more strikingly than in any other way, by their methods of feeding. The plants absorb their nourishment in the form of the mineral salts, held in solution by water, through the whole surface of the body-wall, much as a sponge absorbs water. The lowly animals, on the other hand, though in no way superior in size, or in other respects to be distinguished from plants, take their food in a solid form by means of a more or less distinct mouth, and then pass the swallowed particles from this mouth into a very curious kind of stomach. This stomach consists of a small, clear globule of half-fluid matter formed partly by water taken up from the mouth with the food-particles, and partly of a kind of digestive fluid formed by the jelly-like substance of the animal's body. Within this the food-particles are slowly digested, the juices therefrom being slowly distributed throughout the body of the little animal as its 'stomach' circulates within. When only indigestible remains are left in this movable stomach, or 'food-vacuole,' as it is called, they are carried to the surface and expelled. There may be many of these movable 'stomachs' within the same animal at the same time, and these may circulate one after the other in the order of their formation, the first-formed being the first to disappear with its burden of indigestible matter.

The rain-water which collects in puddles or in stagnant ponds often has a rich green colour. This is commonly due to the presence, in millions of millions, of an extremely simple kind of plant, known as the Protococcus. Magnified some three or four hundred times, it has the appearance shown in fig. 1—an egg-shaped body, bright green in colour, and flecked with red. Not only is it unlike what we usually regard as a plant in shape, but it is further peculiar in that it is in ceaseless movement, swimming with its more pointed end forwards by means of the lashing movement of a pair of hair-like threads (which you will see in the picture) known as 'cilia.' The green colour is due to the presence of a special pigment or colouring matter known as 'chlorophyll,' or 'leaf-green,' for the green colour of leaves is also due to this same pigment. However long you might watch it, you would never see it eat anything. And this because, being a plant, it feeds by absorbing through its body-wall the mineral salts contained in the rain-water. Further, by some process not yet properly understood, the green 'chlorophyll' has the power, under the action of sunlight, of transforming the carbon dioxide—or carbonic acid, as it is sometimes, though less accurately, called—into some other chemical compound, which combines with the absorbed mineral salts to form 'protoplasm,' the jelly-like matter of which the body is made up.

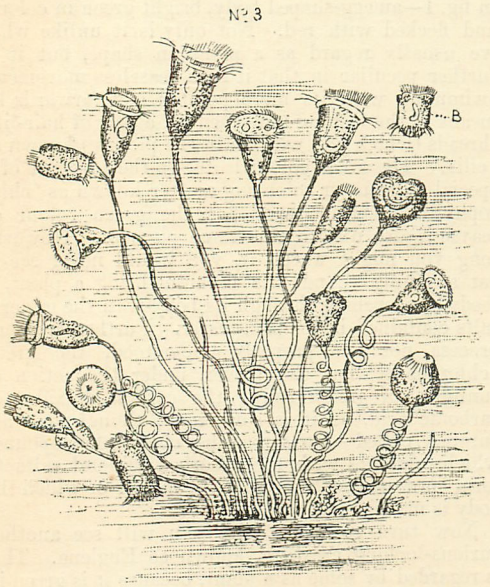
Now turn to fig. 2, and you will see another curious-looking creature, known as Euglena. This is regarded by some as a plant, because it is green in colour, owing to the presence of this chlorophyll, and as an animal by others because it swallows, and digests, solid food. That is to say, it can build up living protoplasm out of non-living chemical elements suspended in the water, just as a plant does; while it also lives very largely by feeding upon the protoplasm formed by other living bodies, just as an animal does.

Plants have been described as differing from animals in that they do not move from place to place. The Protococcus is undoubtedly a plant, yet it is free to move anywhere. Some animals, on the



Protococcus, found in stagnant water (highly magnified).

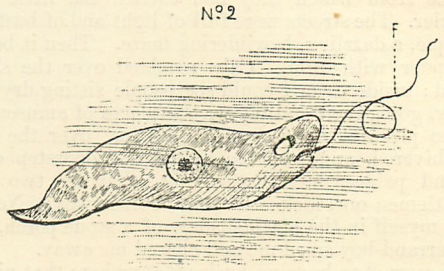
other hand, are fixed. The very beautiful 'bell-animalcula,' for example, is fixed by a long, slender stem, though at the least suspicion of danger this stem can suddenly contract, the stem coiling like a corkscrew till the body is drawn down to the ground



Plant-animals, showing corkscrew stalk and detached animal (magnified).

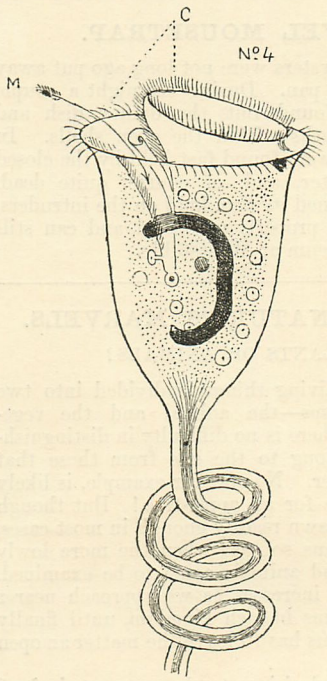
(see fig. 3). But occasionally the body breaks away from the stalk and swims off (see fig. 3 B), as if to prove its right to be considered an animal. In fig. 4 you may see what one of these wonderful creatures looks like when still more highly magnified.

The real distinction between plants and animals turns on this: plants can feed upon non-living matter—that is to say, they can transform the



Euglena (highly magnified).

chemical elements obtained from the air and water into protoplasm, the stuff of which all living bodies are made. Animals cannot do this; they can feed only upon the protoplasm of other animals or plants, though this may be eaten either in a living state, or after the death of the animal or plant which produced it.



Plant-animal (very highly magnified).

The higher forms of animal life, then, depend for existence on plant life. The cabbage can get all the nourishment it needs from the sun and the soil, but you and I must eat either beef or cabbage; we cannot contrive to support life even on the richest of garden soil!

If there be any of my readers who cannot quite grasp all that I have said here, I shall be glad if they will write to me and allow me to try to explain away their difficulties.

W. P. Pycraft, F.Z.S., A.L.S.

SOME LONDON PARKS.

I.—ST. JAMES'S PARK.

ST. JAMES'S PARK is at once the prettiest and the most aristocratic of the parks of London. From Buckingham Palace at the west end to St. James's Palace on the north side, stand stately

Feeding the Birds in St. James's Park.

mansions, including Marlborough House, the home of the Prince and Princess of Wales. To the south lies Westminster, with it its Hall, Abbey, and the Houses of Parliament, and south-east is Whitehall, once a palace, but now devoted to Civil Service offices.

In the early middle ages, a Leper Hospital stood on the site of the present palace of St. James's. But Henry VIII. felt a liking for this pleasant suburb of his capital, and in his own summary fashion pensioned off the lepers, built a palace on the site of their home, and enclosed the surrounding land to be its gardens.

In this palace Charles I. spent his last day and night on earth, and here his children were brought to bid him their last farewell. Possibly this accounts for the special interest taken in St. James's by Charles the Second, who, calling in a little army of French gardeners, had the eighty-two acres of the palace grounds re-arranged and beautified, before throwing them open as a national pleasure place.

Amongst its leafy shades the same king and his Cavaliers were wont to enjoy the then fashionable game of 'Paille-Maille,' the ancestor of our modern croquet. From this game the broad road, bounding the north-eastern corner of the park, takes its name of Pall Mall. 'Paille Maille' was played with mallet, ball, and iron ring, but the ball was driven along an alley of powdered cockle-shells, instead of soft turf.

The Georges resided chiefly at St. James's Palace, and Walpole tells us that George I., on his arrival, was perplexed as to how to regard his new possessions. 'This is a strange country,' he said. 'The first morning I looked out of my window and saw a park with walks and a canal, which they told me were all mine. The next day Lord Chetwynd, ranger of my park, sent me a brace of carp out of my canal, and I was told that I must give five guineas to his servant for bringing me my own carp out of my own canal in my own park!'

Queen Caroline, wife of George II., had still more absolute ideas on the rights of royalty, and desiring to re-acquire St. James's Park as a private possession, consulted Sir Robert Walpole on the subject. 'What do you think it would cost?' she asked. The answer is a famous one. 'Only three crowns, your Majesty'—the three crowns of England, Scotland, and Ireland!

In the early years of the nineteenth century, the whole world of fashion was wont to promenade up and down Pall Mall, especially after dinner on Sunday, and we are assured by a writer of that period that as many as five thousand society beauties attired in full evening dress, and each escorted by a beau with his hat tucked under his arm, might be seen at one time. The proper end of the promenade was Milk Fair, close to St. James's Palace, where cows' and asses' milk was on sale, and a relic of the former milkmaids existed until 1906, when the two remaining old ladies raised a melancholy outcry at the prospect of being ejected with their cows from St. James's Park: they were eventually given stalls elsewhere.

The ornamental water in St. James's Park covers five acres, and boats are allowed on it, affording great pleasure to the hirers. The numerous waterfowl owe their origin to Charles I., being chiefly descendants of the birds he had placed there. They breed largely on the island, and there are hundreds of different birds to be seen and fed at all times.

THE BOOK'S LAMENT.

ON this shelf I'm doomed to stay,
Week by week and day by day.
Frank looks up with half a frown,
But he never takes me down;
Sometimes he will lift a hand
Close to where I always stand,
And, by chance, at times, you see
All his fingers rest on me;
But, next moment, off they glide
To the volume at my side.
That to please him never fails
Since 'tis full of fairy tales!
And when Conscience sometimes sighs,
'Fairy tales won't make you wise!'
Frankie answers peevishly:
'I don't care for history!'

Don't you think—oh, tell me true—
If he'd glance my pages through
Once a week, or once in three,
He might find some fun in me?
Find some fun and something more,
Adding to his mental store?
Easy tales to read and learn
Should not be his whole concern.
And if he would but begin
Just to peep my leaves within,
He would say that I'm a book
Not so solemn as I look.
Ask him kindly not to frown;
Ask him, *do*, to lift me down,
For it grieves me day by day
On this dusty shelf to stay.

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 247.)

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE sergeant presented each of his company of six men with the equivalent of a five-pound note apiece.

'There may be more to come,' he informed them, 'if matters fall out as I expect. That will depend upon your own conduct. It has since occurred to me that, though these two men convinced me for the time being that they were innocent persons, and not the escaped convicts from Yermatsky, I was perhaps too hasty in coming to this conclusion. They are in possession of a sum of money so large that the very amount of it fills me with suspicion. They must be watched awhile; perhaps captured—that will depend upon circumstances. It shall be as I direct at the moment. At present we shall surround the hut in which they intend to rest, but we must remain unseen and unheard.'

In the shalashka, Paul, wearied with the long flight, fell asleep almost as soon as he closed his eyes. The Eagle kept watch, though it was hard for him to do so, for he too was weary to death, and nothing but his devotion for Paul would have kept him awake. The evening fell; it became dusk, and then dark. The Eagle, drowsy at first, grew wakeful

with the manifold dangers that occur to a fanciful brain in the darkness. The forest is full of sounds by night, and Mark felt sure more than once that he heard in the distance the breaking of twigs and other sounds which betray the movements of men or large beasts. Once he believed that he heard the cough of a man; but listening breathlessly, he was presently startled by the croak of some game-bird, frightened from its night perch atop of a tree, and by the loud noise of its departure as it flew crashing through the topmost pines.

'It may have been the bird,' he told himself, 'but even if so, what frightened it?'

So anxious was he to ascertain this that the Eagle presently went out alone into the forest, creeping like a snake hither and thither, but always within reach of the shalashka in which his friend was asleep, listening for some sound which would betray the presence of an enemy.

The Eagle did not trust the sergeant. If he had now suddenly come upon that rascal, or any of his men, sneaking near the shalashka, it would have fared ill with the midnight prowler.

But he found no trace of the sergeant or his men, who, as a matter of fact, were quite two hundred yards from the hut, each man being well hidden. It was not yet time to leave their hiding-places. This would be done soon after midnight at the signal of a low whistle from their officer.

The Eagle returned from his search more or less reassured. At the end of three hours he awoke Paul, as he had faithfully promised to do.

'I thought I heard some one prowling about,' he told Paul, 'and went out in search, but couldn't find a sign of anybody. There are all sorts of sounds in the forest at night-time; I have often noticed that, so that it is no use being nervous, yet I could have been sure I heard a man cough.'

'Probably a bird or beast,' said Paul, yawning; he had not slept nearly long enough, and felt even more sleepy than when he had first settled down for a nap. 'Whom do you expect? The sergeant again?'

'Quite likely. He saw your money. It would be only natural that he should like to have a nearer look at it if possible.'

Paul laughed and yawned again. 'I think he has too much respect for our revolvers,' he said. 'Well, lie down, Mark, and sleep; the sooner you get your three hours over, the sooner shall I get a second innings. I could sleep till to-morrow afternoon.'

'Do, then; I am not sleepy—at least, not particularly. I will wake you at about six, after which I——'

'Nonsense; lie down, man; fair play. I have had my turn, now it's yours. We will sleep turn about. Don't be too frightened if you hear me shoot; I shall certainly fire if I hear any one prowling about. It will frighten them, and help to keep me awake.' Paul laughed at his own pleasantry, but yawned at the end of his laugh; he was desperately sleepy.

In spite of his denial of the need of sleep, the Eagle was snoring within a few minutes of lying down, and Paul—by way of keeping awake—began to pass in review the conversation he had had with Mark, and the pros and cons for and against the likelihood of the Eagle proving to be his lost twin. Paul really desired that he should prove so to be, in spite of the fact that a twin brother would mean the halving of his property. He reflected drowsily over all these things, and—to make a long story shorter—he was fast asleep almost as soon as the Eagle.

The sergeant lay behind the bush with the soldier Dmitri.

'Dmitri,' he said, 'there are five roubles for you—extra, mark you—if you will undertake a difficult job. You know exactly where the shalashka stands; creep up close to it and listen. If they converse, lie hidden until they snore. Make sure that *both* are snoring, then return. Above all, make no more noise than a cat that stalks a sparrow.'

Dmitri did not greatly relish the job which had been entrusted to him. The pine-trees seemed so ghostly by night; the forest, for all he knew, between him and the hut might be filled with horrible wild beasts of all kinds; there might even be a *Lieshui* about, that weird wood-demon of which most Russian peasants have a superstitious terror even at this enlightened day, when for hundreds of years Christianity has ousted the old heathen gods that were once worshipped in the land.

But the idea of an extra five roubles was more than he could resist, and Dmitri sallied forth alone into the darkness. He knew the direction in which the hut lay, and, being a capable person in his way, he contrived to creep within a few yards of it without having made more noise than a lynx would have made in pursuit of the hare which was to form its dinner.

Then he lay and listened awhile. One of the fugitives suddenly called out in his sleep, 'Mother, I bring you back our lost Mark; love him as I do.' Dmitri waited another minute or two, then he went back to the spot where he had left the sergeant, whom he found with some difficulty.

'It is all right,' he reported. 'Both sleep soundly.'

'Are you sure?' murmured the sergeant.

'At any rate, both are snoring.'

'That might be done to deceive—they heard you, maybe.'

'I vow they could not; I made no sound. One spoke in his sleep, startling me very much; he spoke quite loudly—you might almost have heard it here. Certainly both are asleep. I have earned my five roubles.'

'Well, you shall have the money, supposing that we receive it from these men. Now come. The time has come to act. We will go round and collect the others; make no sound as you go. I listened as you went just now; twice I heard you plunge your foot into the snow. Be careful, now, of places where the surface is frozen. Come.'

Before long the sergeant had collected his men. Fifteen paces from the shalashka they crouched and listened.

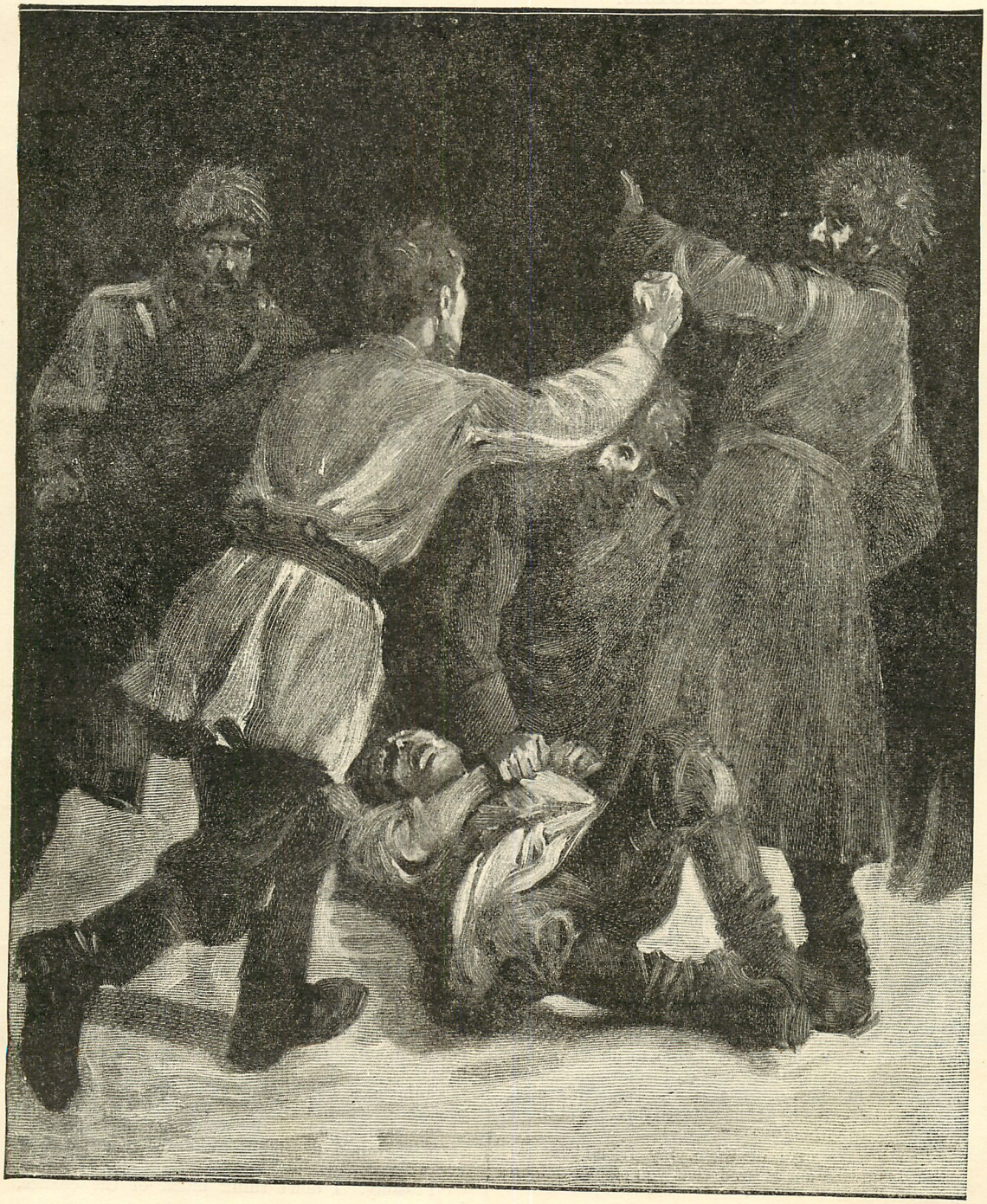
Both men were snoring loudly; the sergeant laughed softly.

'It is well,' he said. 'Come, brothers, follow me quietly. Three men fall upon each, but not a sound until all are safely within the hut.'

(*Continued on page* 258.)

"He contrived to creep to within a few yards of the hut."

THE BEST OF FRIENDS.



"The Eagle made a great fight for freedom."

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 255.)

CHAPTER XXIX.

FIVE minutes after Paul turned over to go to sleep, a terrible upheaval was in progress within the little hut. Three men had fallen upon Paul, three upon the Eagle, both of whom were fast asleep when disaster overtook them. Their capture was not so easy a matter, however, as the sergeant had hoped. Paul, indeed, insensible as a log, was overcome before his consciousness returned to him; but the Eagle, who slept less heavily, having been well startled in the early part of the night, made a great fight for freedom. He started up at the instant when the first finger was laid upon him. Fortunately for the soldiers, the sergeant had taken the precaution to remove their revolvers from the belts of both young men; had he not done so the issue of the conflict might have been very different. The Eagle's hand went at once to his belt, but, finding his revolver gone, he sprang upon his nearest assailant and bore him down. In a moment the struggle was at its height. The Eagle, with his three assailants, heaved and rolled upon the ground. In half a minute scarcely a vestige of the shalashka remained, for the sturdy legs of the Eagle had scattered the pine-branches like chaff as he struggled madly to free himself from his enemies.

For a moment he was successful, and stood upon his feet, bruised and dazed, but free; but, seeing that Paul was apparently a prisoner in the hands of his assailants, he sprang with a yell upon Paul's men.

The sergeant had already succeeded in placing handcuffs upon Paul's wrists, so that all six men were now free to attack and overcome the Eagle, who, being but a mortal, though a powerful and fearless one, was obliged to surrender eventually to numbers, uttering bitter words and scornful reproaches as he lay handcuffed upon the ground, and kicked savagely at all who came within reach of his feet.

'Search their pockets,' said the sergeant. 'Stop kicking, you fool, or your legs shall be broken with a rifle-butt.'

A soldier brought down the thick end of a pine-branch with cruel force upon the Eagle's shins, causing him such agony that he was obliged to abandon further efforts, and to lie still while his pockets were emptied.

Paul's pockets yielded a rich harvest. Though he had taken the precaution that evening to hide a few hundred rouble-notes between his socks and his boots, and had requested the Eagle to do the same, in case of accidents, there was still so large a sum of money in his letter-case that the sergeant's eyes glistened as he removed the notes and pocketed them for future attention.

'I shall take care of them, my friend,' he remarked, 'until I am assured that you came by them honestly.'

'You blackguard!' said Paul furiously; 'you took a bribe in exchange for our freedom. What a scoundrel you must be to break your faith within a few hours!'

'I have repented of my foolishness, my friend. I have reflected that I was too easily persuaded by you that you are *bonâ-fide* travellers, and not escaped convicts!'

'I never told you I was not a fugitive. The bargain was——'

'Bargain? My dear sir, I do not understand the term. You were kind enough to offer my men some little reward, as you put it, for their trouble and lost time in pursuing innocent persons, but there was no bargain.'

The Eagle laughed. 'Listen, men, what a liar your sergeant is!' he said.

This remark brought upon the Eagle a savage blow from the former.

'Keep quiet, Mark,' murmured Paul; 'we can do no good by abusing them—we must bide our time. This is our day of misfortune.'

Thus, to make our story shorter, the crafty will of Mr. Sergeant triumphed over the inexperience of the twins, and their recapture was complete. Moreover, the money-bag was lost to them, which, Paul knew well, was almost a more serious matter than the temporary loss of freedom.

For the rest of the night the party rested in a new shalashka, built out of the ruins of the hut kicked down by the Eagle in his frantic efforts to retain his liberty. When morning came, the wrists and ankles of the prisoners were released, and they were allowed to walk, three soldiers riding in front and three behind. Neither Paul nor the Eagle made any effort to escape; both knew well it would be useless at present. So the day passed, and for the night quarters were secured at the nearest convenient village. Here the prisoners were stared at by inquisitive villagers, hooted at by many, pitied by a few.

The second day passed in the same dreary, monotonous manner. Occasionally the prisoners talked in whispers when opportunity offered; but conversation was not permitted by the sergeant, and their chances to exchange a few words were rare.

Once the Eagle said, 'What is on my mind, Paul, is the idea of being knouted when we arrive at Yermatsky. Unless I am tied up so tightly that I cannot move, I shall get my fingers about some one's throat, and there may be trouble. I am certain I shall never control myself.'

'Poor old Mark!' said Paul. 'I quite sympathise. We must try and bear it, old chap; there's no other way. We should be shot if we resisted.'

'Would it not be better to make a dash for freedom before we get there, at a certain spot which we could fix upon: each dash at a soldier, drag him from his horse, mount in his place, and have a gallop for liberty?'

Paul shook his head. 'Six rifles,' he said, 'repeaters, of course. One or two bullets would be almost sure to go home before we could get cover.'

'That would depend. If there were a patch of dense forest, now——'

'Possibly. I don't think much of the chance, however.'

'Yes, but think of the knout.'

'I am thinking of it. I will consider, and tell you what I think later. On the last day we might

possibly try your plan; if it succeeded, we would ride eastwards, not westwards—that would put them off the track—and get on some soldiers' train going towards the war.'

'Good! They say volunteers are being taken from among ex-convicts for a Siberian regiment.'

If the prisoners had made the suggested attempt, in all human probability they would have been shot down. Fortunately for them, the most unexpected of all things happened, relieving them of the necessity to undertake the 'forlorn hope' of an attempted dash for freedom.

(*Continued on page* 270.)

THE SONG OF THE KITE.

HO, ho! 'tis fine to take a flight!
And who can feel surprise
That I should wag with keen delight
My tail amid the skies?
Oh, March my favourite month shall be
Of all the long, long year,
For that's the very month, you know,
When all the pleasant breezes blow
That carry me up here.

Eleven months!—just think of *that*—
In prison I have been,
Beneath a load that pressed me flat
Where light is never seen;
For Edward's playbox, deep and wide,
Is kept in such a state,
That once a captive lies below
Its gloomy, gloomy lid, you know,
Down there he has to wait.

I heard the winds of last July
Across the garden wail,
And in my prison fain was I
To wag a friendly tail;
But space forbade, and so I lay
In silent stillness there,
Day in, day out, till, by-and-by
Their gentle voices ceased to sigh,
And went, I know not where.

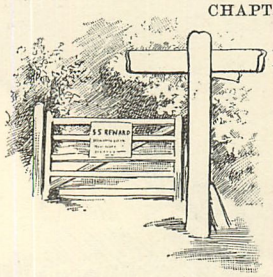
I heard the bees of August come
To loiter round the vine,
And knew, by their contented hum
The day was warm and fine;
And Edward took his cricket-bat,
The wickets, and the ball;
And as I chanced to catch his sight
He cried, 'That's only my old kite!
We shan't want *him* at all.'

And so the long year rolled away,
And March has come to reign.
O happy wind! O happy day!
I'm free, I'm free again.
I'll dive among the fleecy clouds;
I'll climb into the sky,
And wish the string would never end,
For then no more would I descend,
In that dark box to lie.

NOBODY'S DOG.

(*Continued from page* 251.)

CHAPTER XI.



THE days which followed seemed each to grow harder than the last. I picked up bits of bread, of which a good deal seemed to be thrown out into the streets; I got a drink of water wherever some merciful hand provided it, and I rested in any place into which I could creep without being seen.

How many miles I travelled, footsore, hungry, and sad, I cannot tell. Often I was hunted along by thoughtless lads, who pelted me with stones; but the boys were not all bad, and many a time some little fellow—bare-footed, ragged, and as homeless as I was myself—would share with me his scanty breakfast or supper. Things went from bad to worse as the evenings began to grow chill and the nights frosty. I was always on the tramp through streets which seemed to be endless, and I suppose I must have reached at last a part of the town where only poor people lived, for the rows of houses grew more dirty and shabby, and the streets more full of quarrelling and fighting, especially after dark.

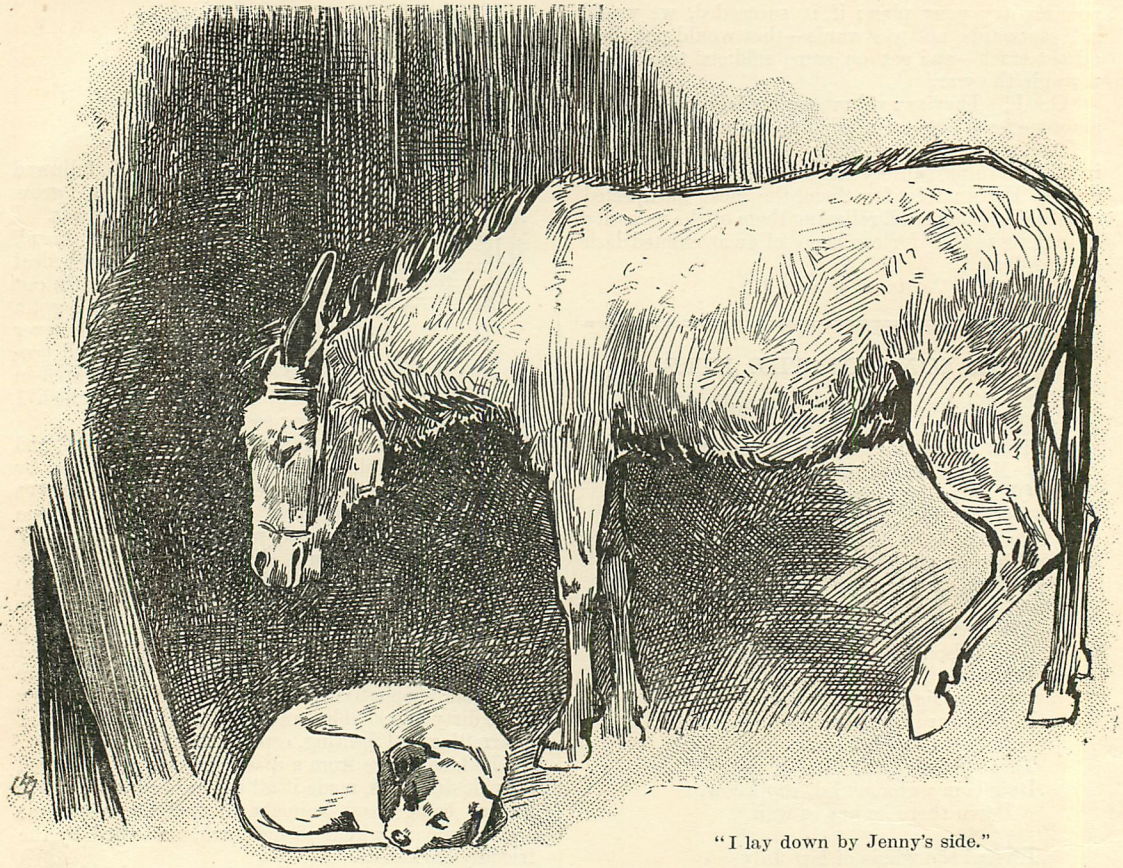
The feeble flare from a dismal lamp or two, placed at wide distances, made it all the easier for homeless human beings and animals to find at least some secret hole in which to lie down, protected by the friendly darkness.

Under a big black archway a lot of men and boys slept every night, or tossed fretfully about on the ground, awake. On the first really bitter night of approaching winter, I dared to steal in and take my place among them, and they received me as a comrade in misfortune. Starved and half-clad as many of these outcasts were, they clubbed together and kept me for days, each giving me what he could, though he went short himself. For this charity to the poorest and smallest amongst them all, I feel sure that somehow and somewhere they will be the better off.

One man, with a dreadful cough, kept body and soul together by selling herrings up and down the meanest of streets, where live the poorest of mankind. He was not rich enough to own the wretched little donkey and cart which he used. He was hired by another man. Nor were the customers rich enough to pay him money for the herrings.

At the sound of a bell which he rang, the women came swarming out with old rags, bottles, and bones in their hands, which they exchanged for the fish. The rubbish was then carted away to a big yard to be sorted out.

The longing that every dog feels to belong to somebody made me follow this man, and while he was making his bargains, I sat in the cart to take care of its contents and converse with the donkey. She told



"I lay down by Jenny's side."

me that her name was Jenny, that the man who owned her was said to make much money by the trade, and owned many carts and donkeys to do the same sort of thing; but that she herself was poor enough, as any one might see, and that her driver, who was commonly called 'Fish,' though that was not his real name, only got sixpence a day wages and as many herrings as he could eat, but he was unable to pay for lodging, and slept where he could.

"A comrade in misfortune."

'I don't like herrings myself,' said Jenny, 'but since Fish has driven me I have never been what I call really starved, and I have a shed to sleep in. He is a good fellow, is Fish.'

But living on herrings, and hawking them about the streets in all weathers by day, and sleeping under bridges by night, did not suit Fish. His cough got worse, and one day they led him tottering into a house, and he never came out again so far as I know.

Somebody led Jenny away to the little coal-shed where she slept, and I managed to squeeze in too, and lay down by her side.

With that happy ease, enabling creatures like us to sleep away the time, we dozed and took no thought for the morrow. Early next day, a man came with a halter and rope to lead the donkey away. I slipped out of the shed, and lingered at a little distance to see what would happen, and to judge whether it would be safe for me to follow.

(*Continued on page* 266.)

Feeding the Pigeons in Finsbury Park.

SOME LONDON PARKS.

II.—FINSBURY PARK.

FINSBURY PARK is one of the most attractive of the London pleasure-places, owing to the beauty of its site and the lovely views obtainable from the higher parts over High Beech and Epping Forest. The New River runs round the northern end of the hill near the cricket ground, and adds

much to the interest of that side. The lake is in the centre, and stands high, the ground sloping gently away to the pleasure grounds, where every kind of amusement has been arranged—lawn-tennis courts, football grounds, fine gymnasiums, numbers of boats on the lake, and a band stand, round which crowds gather.

Green Lanes form the eastern boundary of the park, and the fortunate inhabitants of the neighbourhood have certainly every pleasure provided for them in a lavish fashion. Plant-lovers are not forgotten, and large greenhouses, brilliant beds of flowers, and ornamental shrubberies form the chief attraction to many. The trees are very fine, and often of great age, owing to the fact that much of the park formerly formed part of the old wood of Hornsea.

In very old times the park and manor of Hornsea were a favourite meeting-place of princes, and grand pageants were frequently performed there in their honour. The oldest recorded of these took place in 1386, when the Duke of Gloucester, the Earls of Arundel and Warwick, with others, met to oppose the election of De Vere, Earl of Oxford, to certain high offices which it was the King's pleasure to confer upon him. The vast assemblage in the park seems to have alarmed the King greatly, and we read that 'he took the nobles into his chamber, gave them fair words, and made them feast together.'

Another royal association of Hornsea Park is a very sad one: it was the scene of the last public appearance of the boy King, Edward V., with his young brother. On his way towards the City he was met by the Mayor and Aldermen attired in scarlet robes, and by five hundred Members of the House of Commons resplendent in violet, whilst before him his uncle, Richard, with his immediate attendants, rode bareheaded, dressed in deep mourning, pointing out to the people their new ruler. In this fashion the boys were escorted to the Tower of London, then used as a palace, and some vision of the dreadful fate awaiting them seems to have overshadowed the children, as we read that they were too cold and fearful of danger to give hearty answer to the loyal people.

Some centuries later it became the fashion to fight duels on a little hill beside the Hornsea Woods. The woods, too, were renowned for flowers and luxuriant growth, and here the gentle poet Crabbe loved to wander, searching for plants and rare insects.

Owing to the age of the wood, great trouble was experienced after the public opening of Finsbury Park from the 'rights of way' which formerly crossed it. Owing to these it was impossible to close the gates at night, and much damage and annoyance were caused by droves of cattle passing through at all hours. However, these difficulties were adjusted in one way and another, and owing to the Finsbury Park Station being close to the pleasure grounds, they have become quite one of the most popular resorts in London.

He who is proud of his fine clothes owes his reputation to his tailor. *Old Proverb.*

THE OLD MAN.

An old man was walking through a certain city. As he passed along you might have noticed that his face was very stern. At times, however, a kindly smile would light it up, and make it almost pleasant. Strange to say, all the young men and maidens, boys and girls, that passed him cried out as if in pain, and seemed very unhappy thus to meet him; but the older folk grasped him by the hand, and seemed pleased to see him, at the same time thanking and blessing him for some favours which he had bestowed upon them. Now, would you seek to know the old man's name? He is as ancient and well known to us as ever Father Time was, and his name is Experience!

ROUND THE CAMP-FIRE.

I.—RALPH'S LITTLE NIGGER.

(*Continued from page* 226.)

Life was pleasant enough at Umbana's kraal (Ralph continued, the next evening), for the sport was excellent. Moreover, as I say, I was treated as an honoured guest and a hero; but my time drew to an end, and it was necessary to remind my host that the best of friends must part. When I told him, Umbana looked thoughtful, and presently he gave me to understand that he had a great favour to ask of me. This proved to be a request that I would take young Momba back with me, and put him to school in England.

The request rather took my breath away. I constantly made difficulties. Momba would find the life so very different, he might not be happy. Here he was a prince of the blood, but in England he would merely be a boy among boys; he would be treated with no deference; he might even be bullied on account of his complexion, and so forth.

'All this is nothing,' replied his father. 'Let the boy learn to be humble: that is the high road to greatness.'

'It would be an expensive matter,' I pointed out; 'perhaps the King did not realise that much money would be required?'

'Every year,' said the King, 'I send gold from my own mine to Bulawayo, where the bank is; take what money is needed—there is enough.'

Well, eventually I acceded to the King's request and took young Momba under my wing. He was absolutely devoted to me by this time, and I liked the little rascal very well; I took, moreover, a kind of paternal interest in him; his confidence in me was rather touching, and though slightly inclined to adopt a superior bearing towards the rest of his fellow-creatures, he had none of this kind of pride with me.

All went well upon the journey down to Bulawayo, where I visited the bank and ascertained that all was satisfactory as regards money matters. This was a relief to my mind, for I was not anxious to be saddled with the cost of my young friend's journey to England, his outfit, and his education.

However, there was plenty of money, and all went well. Momba was immensely impressed by all he saw

in Bulawayo. Still more was this the case at Capetown, where he would scarcely be persuaded to speak at all during the first few hours of our stay there. When he did find his tongue, I think I never heard such a jabber as the excited lad set up; his imagination seemed to overflow suddenly, and he flooded me with an outburst of weird questions and remarks upon what he had seen. But I must tell you about his school experiences, which were rather interesting and peculiar, and threatened at one time to land me in unpleasant situations which I had not contemplated when I first conceived the idea of bringing Momba to an English school.

I had made arrangements with the head master of a school near my own home. Momba was to be taken in as a boarder, and to pay double fees; the house master did not care to undertake the responsibility for less. I took him to Atfield myself, and introduced him to the masters, and after an hour spent in walking round the school premises, I prepared to depart. Momba would not allow me to go, however, and two of the boys were told off to hold the poor lad while I made my escape. Momba struggled and fought like a madman in order to follow me, and I passed out of sight while the struggle still continued.

On the following day I was telegraphed for. Could I come at once, the message ran—'something happened.'

Fortunately I was able to catch a train which landed me without loss of time at Atfield. 'What was the matter?' I inquired anxiously of the master. 'Had Momba hurt himself, or done anything foolish? What had happened?'

'Momba is locked up,' said Mr. Taylor, the house master. 'He was sullen after you left, and would speak to no one, but only muttered in his own language. The boys were playing with a cricket ball in the quadrangle, towards evening, and young Fraser sent him a catch, calling out, "Catch it, you little nigger!" The ball struck Momba in the chest; he never attempted to catch it—Fraser's words seemed to have infuriated him. He instantly rushed after Fraser, who turned and ran, laughing, across the quad.

'My little terrier, Dart, was playing with the boys: she loved to do so, and the boys were all fond of her, and she now took part in the game. Momba ran fast, and Fraser had difficulty in dodging him. Some one saw the little rascal take something out of his pocket and strike at Fraser with it—and thank Heaven that he missed his aim! The dog, Dart, apparently was on Fraser's side in the game, and jumped, barking good-naturedly, at Momba as he ran, and then—all of a sudden—a tragedy happened. Momba struck at the dog with the object, whatever it may have been, which he had taken out of his pocket, and poor Dart, with a howl of pain, fell back upon the ground; she seemed to struggle for a moment or two, then she stiffened, and within half a minute was dead.

'Momba, meanwhile, had flourished his small knife—we supposed it was a knife—in the air, had shouted some incomprehensible words in his own tongue, and fled to his study. The poor little dog, I may tell you, turned black within a short space of time, and the veterinary surgeon whom I called in to see her declares that the slight prick she had received would have been absolutely harmless by itself, but that the object with which the blow was given must have been steeped in some most virulent poison. I thought,' Mr. Taylor ended, 'I had better just turn the key upon Master Momba, allowing him to sleep in his study, and wire for you, lest worse things should happen.'

'I assure you,' I murmured, 'I had not the slightest idea the little wretch possessed anything of the kind. I should never have brought him——'

'Oh, of course, I quite understand that,' said Mr. Taylor. 'I don't blame you at all; but do, like a good fellow, interview the young savage and deprive him of the terrible weapon he seems to possess. He won't hurt you, I suppose, but for goodness' sake be careful.'

'Oh, he won't hurt me,' I replied, and forthwith I was shown to Momba's study, unlocked the door and entered.

Momba had cowered away from the door and stood at bay by the window; probably his conscience was ill at ease, and he expected punishment; but upon seeing me, his dusky face beamed with delight and affection and he sprang to meet me.

'Ralpi!' he exclaimed, clinging to me, but I held him away from me.

'Momba,' I said gravely, 'you have done very badly, you have acted like a savage beast. Why?'

'They threw a hard thing at me—I was angry because you go—I tried to kill——'

'Give me the weapon,' I said; 'I will speak no more words until I have it.'

'Yes, take it—it is better—I did not want it—it was Toganda's fault,' said Momba, handing me a small object. 'Toganda made me have it in case the foreigners were cruel to me; take it.'

The deadly little instrument was but a tiny pointed iron pencil, the sharp end covered with a clumsy sheath. I shuddered as I took it from the lad: what terrible things might have resulted from his unguessed possession of the fatal weapon.

'Momba,' I said, 'what do you mean? What did Toganda say to you?'

'She say, "Take this; if the foreigners wish to hurt Momba, prick them with this, then they no hurt Momba."'

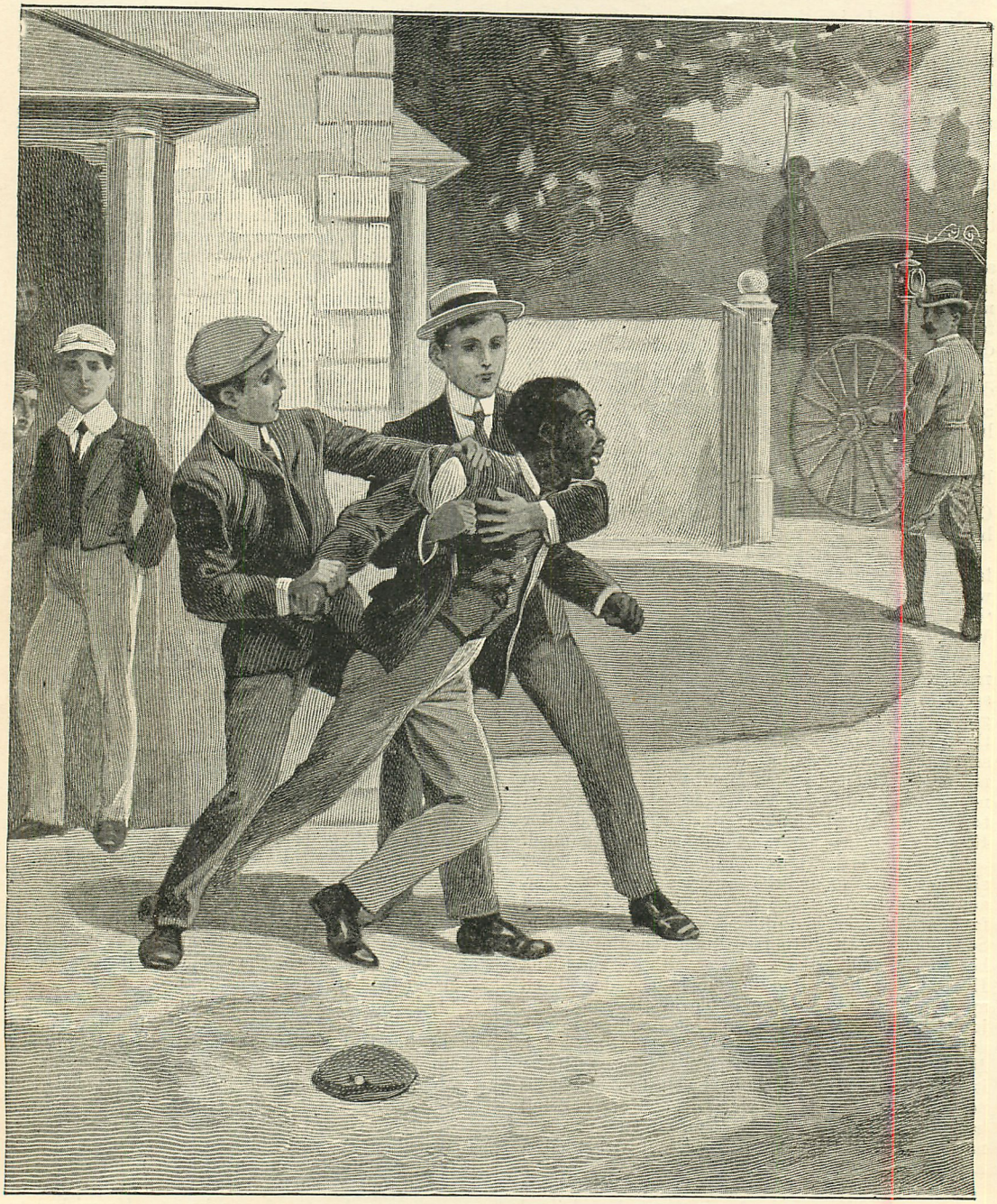
Toganda was an old hag living in Umbana's kraal, who made enough to live upon by selling charms and such things to the people of her tribe. I remembered the old creature well.

'Did Toganda give you anything else?' I asked. Momba shook his head. 'Momba should have shown it to Ralpi,' I said. 'It was bad of Momba; if Umbana knew, he would be very angry.'

Momba hung his head. 'Toganda say, not tell Ralpi, not tell Umbana, not tell nobody,' he said.

Well, of course I gave Momba a good talking to. I pointed out the wickedness of his behaviour; I told him he would have to return to his own people, and so forth, and gradually I reduced him to tears of repentance and vows of amendment. He wished to stay in England awhile and learn the game of cricket, which I had partly taught him in far-away Africa, and as to the delight of which I had waxed, many a time, most eloquent.

(*Concluded on page* 287.)



"Momba struggled and fought like a madman."

"The good man stared with amazement."

PERSEVERANCE FINDS A WAY.

FAR away, in a small cottage in the Tyrol, there once lived a little boy who longed to draw and paint pictures of the valleys, trees, peasants, cows, sunsets, and wonderful mountains which surrounded him on every side. But the boy had no money at all, and his father, a poor mountaineer, was quite unable to spend anything on pencils, brushes, or paints. 'Come, Father! come and look!' cried the boy one day, and the good man stared with amazement to see a picture on the wall of his white cottage.

'My boy,' he asked, 'did you draw that? Where did you get those colours from?'

Determined to do his best with the materials to hand, the boy had industriously collected flowers, and crushed them to obtain their beautiful tints. After that, the side of the little cottage was covered with all sorts of lovely pictures, and the boy grew to be the world-famed artist, Titian.

NOBODY'S DOG.

(*Continued from page* 260.)

AS I hesitated, once more, to leave the shed—I could not be mistaken—I certainly heard the notes of Piping Pat's flute. I ran a little way, looking about me, but all was silent again. With drooping ears and tail, I fell behind the man who was leading Jenny up a narrow turning into a stable-yard. About a dozen men were lounging here, some idle, one grooming a horse, another blacking shoes, while in the middle of them stood one, taller than the others, resting his back against the wall, holding in his hand a reed flute.

Something about this figure seemed familiar to me, and when he raised the flute to his lips, in a moment the world was changed. I did not see the dingy stable-yard, nor the horse, nor the men, nor the donkey. Everything faded away, and I was gazing at the green elms overshadowing Luke's cottage, and listening to Piping Pat as he walked towards it over the Flat Crofts, playing 'Home, sweet home'

It was Pat himself. I rushed at him to make sure that my eyes and ears did not deceive me. On my nose I could depend; it always told the truth. I sniffed wildly at his legs. It was, indeed, the wandering musician in the flesh. I then jumped at him as if I would eat him alive. They might think me mad—I did not care.

At first Pat did not know me, I was so changed, so haggard, wild, and woe-begone. The noses of human beings are of little or no use to them, it would seem, for he never thought of sniffing me to make sure that I was little Jim.

'Hullo! this dog knows you!' said one of the men, taking his pipe from his mouth.

'And I know him right enough; he answers to the name of Jim. How he got here is best known to himself. He lives down in the country, where I live myself, and he is wanted by his friends.'

At this point Jenny put in a little bray, as if to hint at a wish to share in the proceedings.

'This is the donkey, is it?' said Pat, turning to the man who led her.

'This is the ass, sir,' said the other, shaking the rope. 'She's for sale dirt cheap, for the man whom I hired to drive her died yesterday, sudden; and I am thinking of giving up trade and retiring.'

'It's about time the donkey retired, too,' said Pat. 'She looks as though she'd had enough of the trade. However, I only want her to carry a couple of light panniers, and she will have an easy time with me; but she's not worth——'

A lot of men's talk followed, but it ended in Pat buying the donkey. She was tied up in the stable, and I was fastened to a manger at her side. She then enjoyed, as she afterwards told me, the first square meal of oats she had tasted for months, while I feasted on a plateful of scraps. Fresh water was not forgotten, and Pat waited on us with his own hands.

While we both fed in perfect silence, Pat seated himself upon a truss of straw in a corner, and his hands stole to the pocket where his beloved flute dwelt, holding within it the music which he alone could draw out. 'Home, home, sweet home,' with piercing sweetness, the notes thrilled. 'And soon we will be there!' he said, putting a finger under my chin, to raise my face. 'Poor wee doggie, what suffering is written here, and on the face of this creature, too,' he added, gently stroking the shoulders of the ass. 'There's a home for us all under the blue roof of heaven, and room upon its green floor, away from the smoky ceilings and fusty carpets of human dwellings.'

The next morning Piping Pat strapped a light load on Jenny's back of such things as we needed, and, holding her head already an inch or two higher, she was ready to set out.

All that day we travelled on, slowly getting clear of the endless streets and houses, and stopping to feed and rest at proper times. Pat soon found that my only fear was to lose sight of him, so he let me run loose, and put my collar and chain in his pocket. It began to be very exciting when our road reached hedgerows and wound through woods, where I could smell rabbits; but I never forgot, even in the middle of a chase, to look back for Pat and Jenny, and make sure I was not lost again.

I cannot tell how long our journey was, in the way men count distances, but we did not hurry; and before I saw the hills, whose shapes I knew a long way off, the falling leaves from the trees made our pathway soft to the tread, and their flutter through the fresh air tempted me to many a game. I pretended they were butterflies, and the leaping up to catch them, and the exercise and fresh air, revived my health. Jenny greatly improved in looks, too, and would even kick up her heels and frisk with me of an evening, when she was turned loose to graze on some common, or to pick out from the hedge the dainty weeds she liked. Her coat grew neat and smooth, for, though old in hardships, Jenny was young in years.

'Aged only about five,' Pat said one day, after looking at her teeth; 'yet more than twice your age,' turning back my lips. 'As white as pearl,' he added. 'How short the lives of animals are! We surely might spare them a little kindness, since

they grow old almost before we have done being children. But we must take care of you, Jim. There is a great lady who cares for you—a lady, Jim, who has not broken her word to the little homeless dog she promised to befriend. You just stick close to me, that's all.'

Of course I did not understand all that Pat meant, but my way is, when nicely spoken to, to look as if I did. We came nearer to the places I loved now. Something made me long to run on ahead, and leave Pat and Jenny to follow at their slow pace, which seemed too lingering for me now. I did not want to wait for meals or sleep. I wished to hurry towards the village, which was 'home, sweet home' at last.

When Pat noticed this he buckled the strap round my neck again, and would lead me most of the daytime, while at our stopping-places by night he tied me up. I whimpered a little at this; but, when people have once been good to me, I am not so ungrateful as to murmur at anything they do.

'Don't fret, Jim,' he would say, 'it is for your good and for mine, too. I am but a poor man; and, look here, Jim, what a pity you can't read! It would make a proud dog of you to know what you are worth!'

As he said this we were passing a gate, to which a white paper was posted. He held me up, as if I were to read the words on it myself, and said aloud—

'"£5 Reward.—Lost! a rough-coated terrier. Answers to the name of Jim. Whoever will bring the same to Crofton Court will receive the above reward." There, Jim!' and he put me down. 'We are fortunate, as we shall see in the course of a few hours.'

(*Continued on page* 275.)

LOST IN THE MINE.

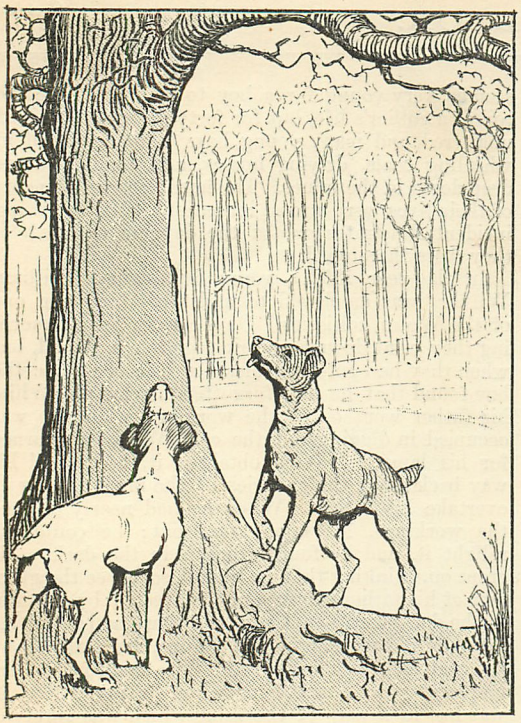
THE work of the miner is at all times very hard and dangerous, but it was much more so in years gone by, before Parliament enforced rules to prevent accidents and unnecessary hardships. When Queen Victoria began her reign, women and very young children were frequently employed underground. We can scarcely believe it, but it is nevertheless true, that children only three or four years of age were sometimes taken down into the mines to work. You will wonder, perhaps, what kind of work so young a child could do. The colliers themselves have answered this question. One of them, giving information for the use of Parliament, says that he took his little child, which was only three years old, into the mine with him. The poor little mite followed him to the place where he was hewing coal, and held a candle for him. By-and-by the child would fall asleep, and then his father laid the little fellow on the coals until the day's work was done and he was ready to return home. A great many people were unaware that children could be so cruelly treated in England, but when once the facts were made known, Parliament hastened to put a stop to such practices.

In 1842 an Act was passed, mainly by the exertions of Lord Ashley, afterwards Lord Shaftesbury, which prohibited the employment underground of any boy under ten years of age. Even that age seemed very young for a boy to begin to bear the toil of a collier's life, but for forty years it remained unaltered, and many young boys were employed in wheeling coals, driving horses, and tending doors deep down in the mines. The hardships and dangers of their lives were almost incredible. The following incident illustrates one of the dangers with which they were threatened.

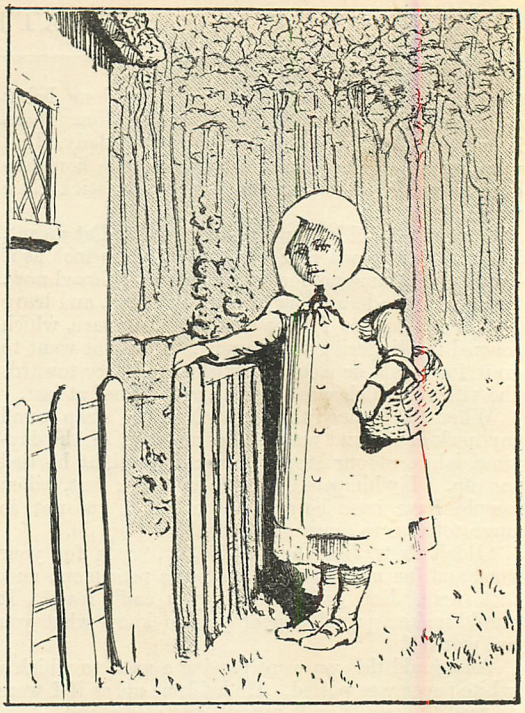
In the year 1852 a young boy named William Withers was employed to assist his father in one of the Welsh collieries. On a certain Friday morning they went down to work together as usual, but when they had got some distance into the mine the boy found that he had forgotten his lamp. While his father went on to the workings, where he was occupied in digging out the coal, William returned for his lamp. Having obtained it, he groped his way back along the galleries of the mine, hoping to overtake his father. When he had nearly reached the workings, his lamp went out; he could not relight it, and he found himself in the dark. He crept on, thinking that he would soon see the glimmer of his father's light and be directed by it. But in the darkness he took a wrong turn, and wandered into the old workings of the mine, from which all the coal had been extracted. We may imagine his helplessness and his terror when he found that he was lost in a part of the mine which was rarely or never visited by the miners. He could hear the picks of the colliers hewing down the coal in the workings, but, having no light to guide him, he knew not which way to turn among the many winding galleries which led in all directions. If only he could make one of the hewers hear him, and come towards him with a light! He knocked upon the walls of the gallery, and shouted as loudly as he could again and again. But it was all in vain; no one heard him; no one thought for a moment that he was there, lost in the abandoned workings.

He wept bitterly when he heard the men cease work and leave the pit for the night. He had brought his dinner with him into the mine, but when he had seen that he was lost, he ate it sparingly, a little at a time. All through the night he watched and slept alternately, often weeping when awake, and when he slept dreaming of the stars in the open vault of heaven. On Saturday morning the workmen came again, and he renewed his efforts to make them hear him, and tried again to grope his way towards them. But he met with no greater success than on the previous day, and at midday the work of the pit ceased until Monday.

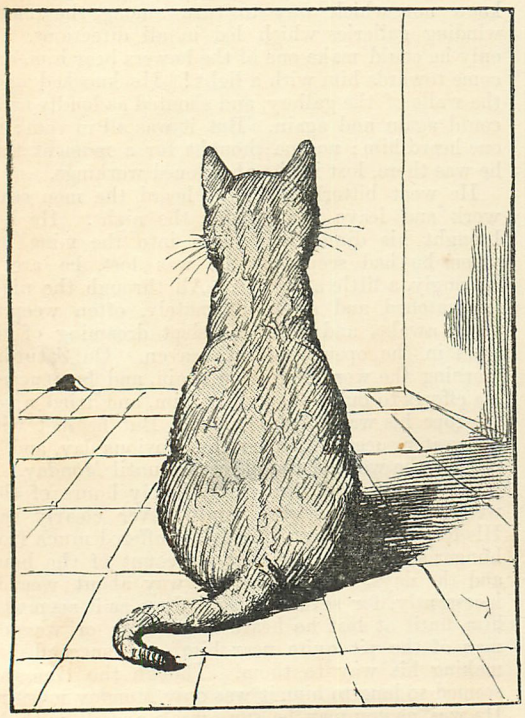
How he passed the weary, lonely hours of that week-end the poor boy could never clearly tell. His food was exhausted, and he suffered much from hunger and thirst. He lost all count of the hours and the days. He groped his way about wearily, incessantly, for seven or eight days as it seemed to him, until at last he heard the haulers or waggonmen of the pit quite near him, and succeeded in making his way to them. Though the time had seemed so long to him, it was only Monday morning. He was, as you may be sure, weak and ill with his three days' fasting and anxiety when the colliers carried him home to his parents, who had nearly given up all hopes of seeing him again.



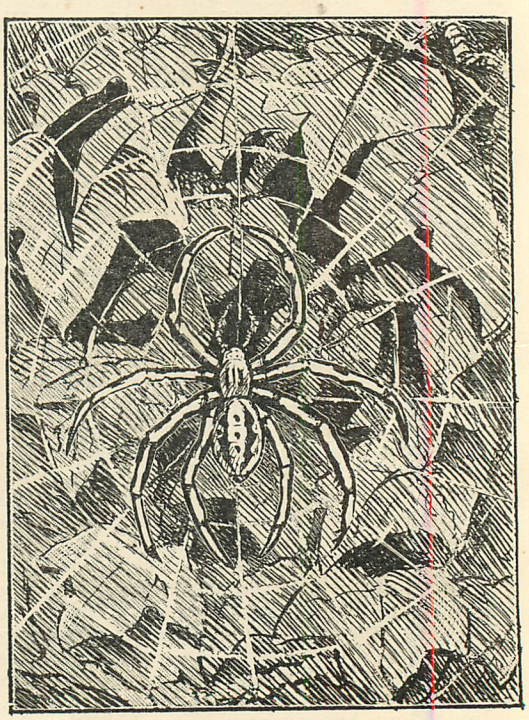
Find the Cat.



Find the Wolf.



Find the Mouse.



Find Miss Muffet.

A PAGE OF PICTURE PUZZLES.

"The carriage was attached to the back of the engine."

LITTLE GIANTS OF LABOUR.

VI.—ROAD ENGINES.

ONE September day in the year 1786, a party of gentlemen sat in a large room amusing themselves with a wonderful toy. It was a tiny locomotive engine invented by one of them, a Mr. William Murdock, for use on the public roads. It had been puffing up and down the room for some time, when one of the party suggested that it would be well to

see how much work it could do. In another moment the tongs were fetched from the hearth and placed as luggage on the back of the little giant. 'Oh, I can carry more than that!' it panted proudly. So the shovel was added, and after that the poker, and under this load the sturdy midget continued its journey, travelling backwards and forwards over the wooden floor until some miles had actually been covered.

But that was as far as Mr. William Murdock's engine ever went, and it was nearly twenty years later before the first locomotive appeared on an English road. It was made by Richard Trevithick, who is supposed to have taken his ideas from what Mr. Murdock had already done. Though more than thirty years behind an engine made in France for a similar purpose, it may surely be said to lead the procession of road-motors, since it travelled at a speed of nine miles an hour. Its French rival could only travel at two.

Next comes another, invented by Sir Goldsworthy Gurney in 1827. He called it a steam coach, and when doing its best it would carry passengers at twenty miles an hour; but its best was seldom done. Mounted on high wheels (the pair of driving wheels being five feet tall) it presented a strange appearance. On the seat in front the drivers sat, while from the back end rose a tall iron funnel. Yet, clumsy as this steam coach was, it had a distinguished if short career. Between Cheltenham and Gloucester it travelled three times a day, and once, when returning from Bath to London, was met at Hounslow by the Duke of Wellington in his own carriage. The Duke's horses were thereupon given a holiday, the carriage was attached to the back of the engine, and, the hero of Waterloo and his friends having taken their seats, the journey to London was continued in triumph.

If the travellers were inconvenienced by the fumes from the smoke-stack just in front of them, they did not say much about it, for history does not tell of any complaints on this score. There were, however, other reasons that compelled Sir Goldsworthy Gurney's steam carriage to retire from business. The hostility of the country folk was so great, the tolls charged so enormous, and the obstacles continually put on the road made travelling over them so difficult that the enterprise was abandoned.

Since then the road locomotive has come again—this time with rubber tyres and new-fashioned engines capable of far greater speed; and the laws of the land have opened the roads to—the motor-car.

THE MONKEY AND THE WATCH.

THE captain of a ship had a monkey on board. One day he left his gold watch and chain on a table in his cabin. The mischievous passenger got possession of these by some means, and with them ran up the rigging, and out on the topsail yard. A sailor went after him, and tried to coax him to give up his prize, but in vain. When the sailor got near him he would threaten to drop them, and then laugh and chatter as if it was the best of fun. The captain became impatient and sent another sailor to assist in getting back his property. Just as the two men were reaching out their hands, he reached out his arm and dropped his valuable prize into the ocean. The captain never kept a monkey on board his ship again.

MY CAT.

I HAVE a great big cat, and he
Is such a splendid fellow;
His fur is black as ebony,
His eyes are orange yellow.
He loves to sit upon my knee,
But sometimes, when he's bolder,
While I am writing busily
He clambers on my shoulder.

He follows me about the house,
Runs up and down the staircase;
A visit from a rat or mouse
With us is now a rare case.
When I was lying ill in bed,
For I was in a poor way,
Each day I saw his handsome head
Appearing through my doorway.

They drove away my faithful pet
Until I grew much stronger,
And then upon my coverlet
He'd leap and linger longer.
I love my cat and he loves me,
He's not ashamed to show it;
A happy pair of friends are we,
The Tom Cat and the Poet.

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 259.)

CHAPTER XXX.

AT the end of their third day of captivity, Paul and the Eagle arrived footsore and depressed at a village which they recognised to be that in which they had passed the first night of liberty. The following day would be the last of their miserable return journey to Yermatsky prison, and the last, therefore, upon which an attempt might be made to escape before it was too late. Weary and limping, the two youths trudged into the village at the tail of the leading Cossack ponies. It was the custom of the sergeant to demand hospitality in the villages at those houses which seemed to him most desirable, and it so happened that the first huts which the party came upon were dirty, dilapidated things, quite uninviting to those desiring a night's lodging. At the house of the Starost, however, the sergeant found accommodation for himself and another.

'Two of you find rooms elsewhere,' said he, 'and two accompany the prisoners—you, Mitka and Spiridon. See you are not separated from them. Let one remain awake while the other sleeps.'

The two odd men found room for themselves in the centre of the village, and Paul and the Eagle,

with their escort, tramped on in search of further accommodation.

'Wouldn't this be the opportunity we seek?' whispered the Eagle, excitedly. 'There are only two, and it's dusk.'

'Yes,' said Paul, flushing, 'if necessary; but wait a moment or two. There are not many more huts; it may easily happen that our chaps may choose the very one in which our first friend gave us shelter—Ivan, you remember?—and if so——'

'I see, I see!' the Eagle whispered. 'Yes; that would be better. If not, Paul, I propose that the moment the soldiers get off their ponies we trip them up and mount.'

Paul nodded. The soldiers reached a house from which the cries of a small baby uprose. One of the men laughed and cried, 'Not there, thanks, Mitka! too much singing.'

At a second house a drunken peasant was bawling out songs at the front door, but assumed a threatening air when questioned by the Cossacks as to accommodation. The arguments were short, but convincing, and the soldiers laughed and passed on.

'The next is dear old Ivan's,' whispered Paul. 'This is splendid.'

Ivan was busy in his back yard, but came out in response to a call. He glanced at the prisoners, and started slightly, but fortunately betrayed no recognition.

'Yes; I can take you all in,' he said. 'Who are these two—convicts recaptured?'

'Of the most violent sort,' explained Mitka, with a laugh. 'We shall not get much sleep to-night, Spiridon and I, for watching them. Get us some vodka, friend, to keep us warm through the night.'

The two captives were now placed in a small dark room, or large cupboard, adjoining the living-room. Here they were told to sleep, if they could, or go to Jericho, for all Spiridon, who bolted them in, cared. 'Only,' said he, 'if you attempt to break out, Mitka and I will be here with half-a-dozen bullets apiece for you—remember that. We have your own revolvers as well as our rifles.'

'Don't be alarmed,' said Paul, yawning; 'we are far too dead tired to attempt anything of that sort. I haven't the strength to break out of a bandbox to-night.'

'Get a sleep while you can, Eagle,' said Paul. 'I caught Ivan's eye. He knows us, and will do all there is to be done. Curl up somehow, and rest every minute you can.'

Paul settled himself with the words, and was soon snoring. The Eagle followed suit, seeing no reason for keeping awake at present. He awoke, however, many times during the next three hours, for Mitka and his companion grew very uproarious over their vodka, and the noise they made was considerable. Some four hours after their arrival, however, he awoke suddenly, and so did Paul. Some one was softly sliding the bolts which secured the door of their little prison. The door opened wide, and a voice whispered, 'Come quickly; they both sleep like pigs. See where they lie and snore.'

A small lamp burned in the room, and Paul saw the two sprawling figures.

'Are they drunk, Ivan?' he whispered.

Ivan nodded. Paul bent, and secured the two revolvers which stuck out of the belts of the two men. Each fellow grunted and turned over, but slept on, snoring loudly.

'No need to tie them up,' he said; 'they are safe till morning. Come out, Ivan, into the cowshed; there is much to say. Ivan,' he continued outside, 'you are a good friend and a true Christian. If I escape this time, I promise that you shall thank Heaven for this day. Now show me, good friend, the Starost's house. You, Eagle, prepare the horses meanwhile.'

'Why the Starost's house?' asked Ivan, much surprised. 'What have you to do with him?'

'One of the soldiers sleeps there. In his pocket is my letter-case, and that case contains no less than three thousand roubles.'

Ivan had never heard of such riches. 'Come,' he said; 'I will show you the house. There was feasting there, also, to-night. I heard the Starost laughing and singing—he and his guest together.'

'They are spending my money, the rascals!' laughed Paul. 'It is time I recovered it, if only to keep them out of mischief.'

As they went softly through the darkness towards the house in which the sergeant slept, Paul questioned the old man. Would he be suspected of having befriended them? If so, it would be better, said Paul, that he should leave the village and all he possessed, and escape with them. 'You shall have a farm upon my estates,' Paul added. 'I have plenty.'

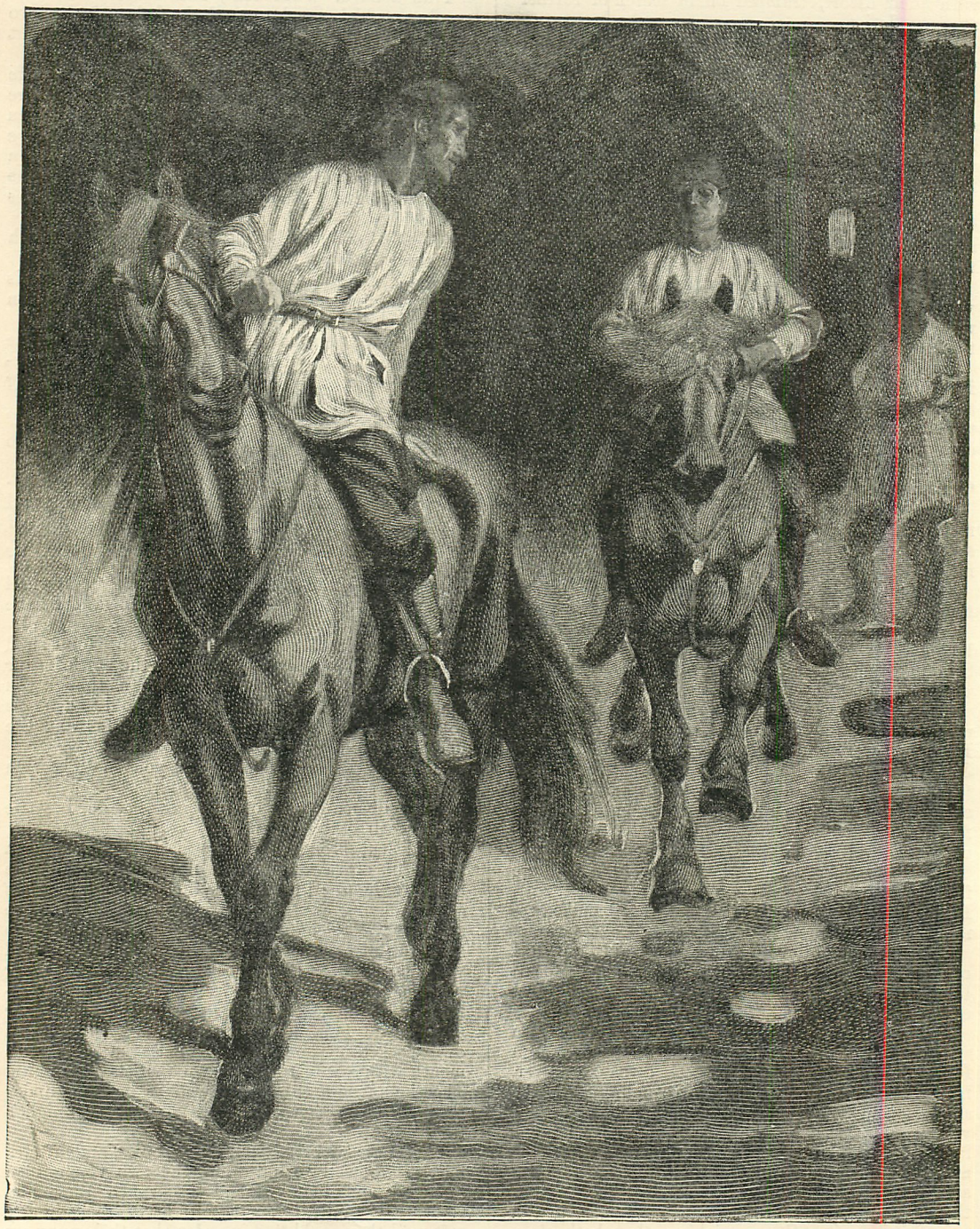
'I shall not be suspected,' said Ivan, 'for I shall be found asleep in my cowshed, and the bolt of your prison-room will be found torn away, as though you had forced your way out. I am too old to attempt to escape back into Russia—it is too far, and the hardships are too great.'

'Then I will send money, and you shall be rich here—ten times as rich as the Starost, or any other in the village. Stop outside now, while I settle matters with the sergeant.'

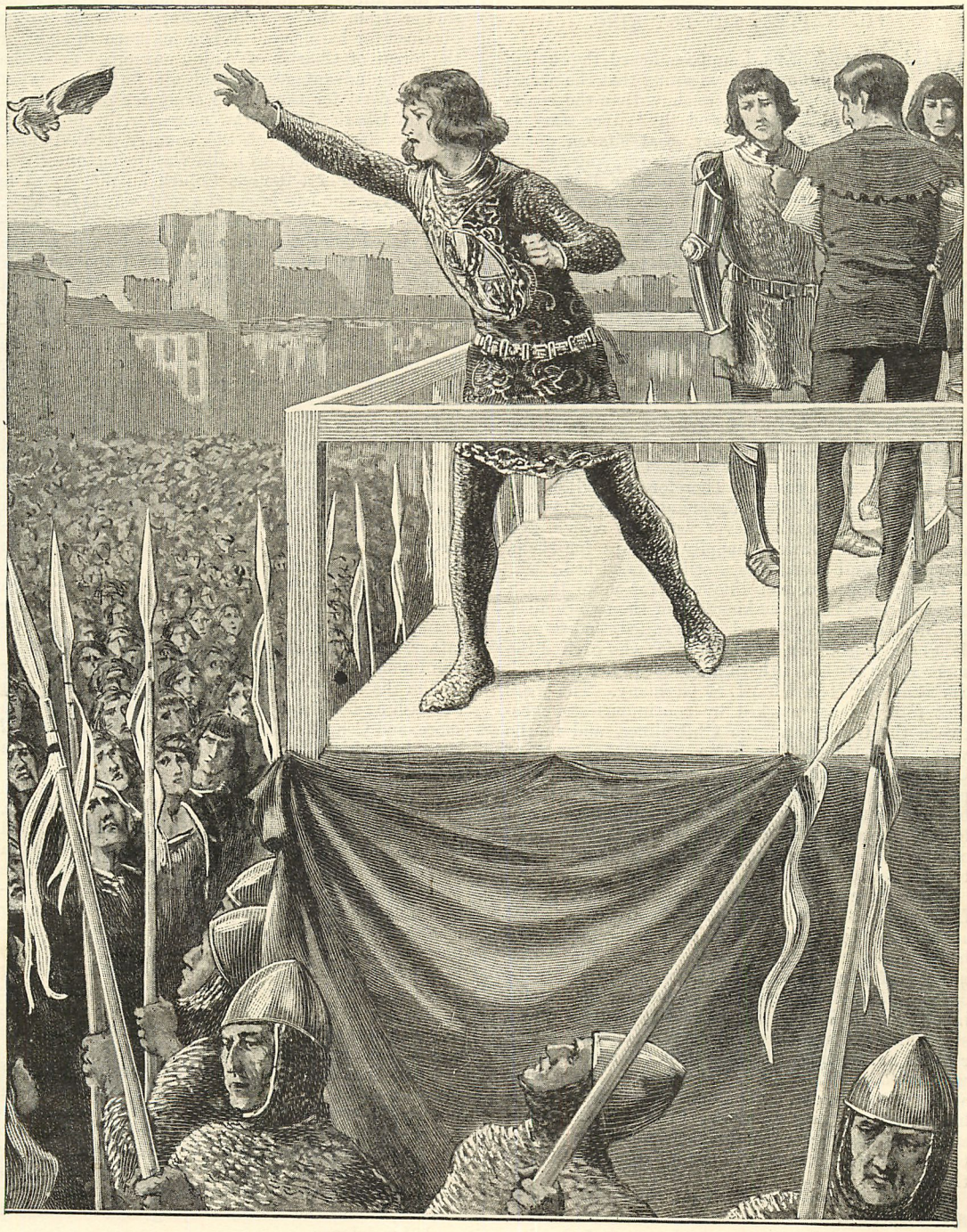
Paul had brought a long piece of cord and a pocketful of sawdust. He went boldly into the Starost's house; the Starost himself lay very fast asleep, having drank freely with his visitor. The sergeant was asleep also, and snoring heavily. The second soldier was probably lying drunk in the shed without. Paul raised the sergeant into a sitting posture, yet he scarcely opened his eyes, so profoundly he slept. The letter-case bulged in an inner pocket, and Paul secured it, transferring it to his own pocket. Then he half-filled the drunkard's mouth with sawdust, and tied his wrists and ankles. Then he left him to sleep as well as he could under these discomforting drawbacks to an easy night's rest.

The Eagle was ready with the ponies, and, after a hurried farewell to old Ivan, the two young men mounted and rode westwards. When they had ridden half a mile, taking care to leave tracks in any soft mud they could find in order that their pursuers might suppose that they were travelling Russiawards, they turned back and rode eastwards, taking care, this time, to leave no tracks.

(*Continued on page* 278.)



"They mounted and rode westwards."



"He flung his glove far among the throng."

FROM THE CITIES OF ITALY.

VII.—NAPLES: THE BOY KING.

WE have, most of us, I suppose, heard the saying, 'See Naples and die,' meaning that the world has nothing more beautiful to show than the coast-line of that matchless bay, and the 'silver star,' as the song fondly calls the city, that sits as queen beside the blue, tideless sea. And yet, sing as they may about the flowers and the sunshine, it is nevertheless true that the stories of Naples are nearly all sad ones. We cannot help thinking of that ominous mountain with the peak, so familiar in pictures and photographs even to the untravelled, that peak which we shall never see again, since it fell in, with thunder and flame, in 1906, when Vesuvius showed once more that terrible power which lies hid beneath his stately beauty. We hardly think of Naples without Vesuvius, the overshadowing cloud, that can turn loveliness into ashes and laughter into mourning, and, just so, the history of one of the most beautiful spots on the face of the earth is full of terrible tragedies, as one ruler after another seized the fair land to oppress and misgovern it, until he or his descendants paid the penalty of his evil doings. Therefore we will choose from the long, sad list, the names of two young princes of Naples who never wore the crown, and who were taken away, happily perhaps for them, leaving behind them names still untarnished.

The gallant Norman line who for more than a hundred years ruled the kingdom of the two Sicilies, as Naples and the Island were called, ended in a daughter, Constance de Hauteville, who carried the sovereignty of the southern kingdom to her husband, the Emperor Heinrich VI. of Germany. The years that followed are marked by continuous strife between the Guelfs and the Ghibellines, and in the year 1265, the Sicilies came under the sway of Charles, Count of Anjou. He ruled his ill-gotten possessions with tyranny and cruelty, and the hot-blooded southern folk hated their French tyrant, and looked forward to the day when young Conradin, the orphan heir of the Emperor Heinrich, should come to man's estate.

Conradin grew up far away in Germany, a fair-faced, gallant lad, with the fire and spirit of his great ancestors. His mother, Elizabeth of Bavaria, foreboding only too truly, poor lady, what the consequence of such dreams would be, tried vainly to dissuade him from the idea of seeking his lawful inheritance in Italy. But when the boy was fifteen she could hold him back no longer. The time seemed ripe for the attempt. In the South, Charles of Anjou was hated, and the Ghibellines in the North were asking for a leader. So Conradin set forth, with his princely young comrade, Friedrich of Baden, and many another noble knight among the gallant band who were sworn to set him upon his father's throne.

Like the Pretender in Scotland, Conradin seems at first to have paralysed his enemies by the boldness of his attack. Pisa, the great naval power of the day, provided him with ships, which cleared the seas of his antagonists, and his march to Rome was like a triumphal progress. It was August, the blazing August of Italy, and Conradin marched southwards by the valleys of the Abruzzi, where there was some shelter from the scorching sun, and water to be obtained for his army. When he came in sight of the forces of Charles of Anjou encamped upon the hills, the advantages seemed all on the side of the invaders, for Conradin's army far outnumbered that of Charles, who was, moreover, by no means sure of the loyalty of the country behind him. That the battle ended as it did was owing entirely to the stratagem of a famous French knight, Alard de St. Valery, who had learnt the art of war in the East. It was he who suggested that Charles, with five hundred picked men, should hold themselves in reserve among the mountain fastnesses until the army of Conradin had exhausted themselves by repeated attacks upon the main body. The plan was entirely successful. Twice did Charles, chafing with impatience, behold his troops giving way before the fiery onslaught; then, when Conradin's men, thinking their victory secure, were scattered and disorganized, the concealed five hundred swept down upon them.

The rout was complete. The boy King, with Friedrich of Baden and a few more of his personal friends, had to fly for their lives, and, reaching the seacoast at Astura, chartered a fishing-boat to take them to friendly Pisa. Unhappily, Conradin, with boyish carelessness, gave a ring to one of the fishermen to exchange for provisions, and the man into whose hands it came passed it on to the Lord of Frangipani, whose castle was close by. Even then the life of the boy King should have been safe, for Frangipani had owed much in past days to Conradin's father, but, to his eternal dishonour, he resolved to win favour with the King of Sicily by handing over to him the son of his own benefactor. He pursued the fishing-boat and carried the fugitives back to shore, and Conradin entered the fair city that should have been his own, not as its sovereign, but as a prisoner on trial for his life.

No just tribunal could have found the brave lad guilty of any crime but that of fighting for his rights, but Charles was resolved upon his death, and induced the infamous judge, Roberto of Bari, to condemn him and his companions as traitors and disturbers of the peace of Italy. Conradin, secure in his own innocence, had no thought of his doom, and was playing chess with his friend, Friedrich of Baden, when the news was brought to him. So general was the indignation that Robert of Flanders, brother to King Charles, is said to have stabbed the perjured judge to the heart, at the foot of the scaffold where the sentence was to be carried out, and not a hand was raised to defend him or to punish the avenger.

Upon that scarlet-hung scaffold, on the 26th of October, 1268, with the whole city watching in horror, the brave boy King stood forth to die. One by one he bade farewell to the faithful friends who had shared his ill-fated attempt, tenderly embracing Friedrich of Baden, who, though only a year or two older than his prince, left a wife to mourn for him.

Then, facing the silent, weeping crowd, Conradin made his defence.

'I am a sinner in the sight of God,' cried the lad, 'and for that I have deserved death, but not for this. Ask of the kings of the earth if a man should be

condemned thus, because he has fought for his own inheritance.'

So saying, he flung his glove far among the throng, a challenge to his foes to make good their accusations, or to his friends to defend his memory, and murmuring the best words for dying lips, 'Into Thy hands I commend my spirit,' he laid his bright young head upon the block. One more tender recollection came to sadden that last moment, and, with his neck bared for the blow, he was heard to say, 'Oh, my mother, what sorrow will this day bring upon thee!'

Then the axe fell, and a passionate cry of grief from Friedrich of Baden told that the brave young soul of the boy King had gone, we may surely believe, to a better crown than that of Naples.

MARY H. DEBENHAM.

THE TEMPLE GARDENS.

[In the summer-time, the children from the surrounding streets of London are allowed to play about in the Temple Gardens every evening.]

TOSSING and tumbling about on the grass,
What a relief to the slum lad and lass!
Watching the players at tennis and bowls,
What a delight to these poor little souls!
Racing and chasing each other with glee,
Under my windows the children I see.

Tearing off jackets and tucking up frocks,
Slipping off stockings and slippers and socks;
Shouting and screaming and uttering squeals,
Turning triumphantly head over heels,
Hordes of street arabs delightedly flock
Into the gardens at six o' the clock.

NOBODY'S DOG.

(*Continued from page* 267.)

CHAPTER XII.

THAT morning we began to draw near a large wood. Though there were many paths softer to our feet and more handy as regards running after rabbits, branching to the right and left, we kept to the hard high road; and when I hinted to Pat that I should like the by-ways best, he said, 'No, Jim, no. We have no business that way. Nobody goes there but the gentlemen after the pheasants with their guns. You wouldn't like to be shot like one of those poor birds. Hark! there are some of the guns going "pop-pop" now, and at every "pop" a bird lies dead.'

I listened, and could hear the sound of guns, some near, some far, while some were so close that they made me jump.

'We are best off in the road, you see, Jim,' said Pat.

As he spoke, Pat was walking beside Jenny, lightly holding the string tied to my collar. All of a sudden we were startled by a loud bang quite close to us. A beautiful pheasant came tumbling down, fluttered for an instant upon the road, and then lay still.

At the same moment I saw Jenny wince, while Pat, dropping my string, suddenly threw up both hands. At the same time I felt a sharp stinging pain in my right shoulder, as if something had struck me. What had happened? All three of us had stopped. We all seemed to be the worse for that loud bang. I ran to the nearest bush for shelter, and sat down under it to lick my shoulder, from which a little blood now began to trickle. Pat seemed hardly to notice me for a minute or two. I could see blood on one of his hands, but he was attending to Jenny, who seemed to be in pain.

'We ought to be near the turning to Daddy Pinch's cottage,' said Pat, half aloud, while he stroked Jenny's soft nose in a soothing way. 'The old fellow knows how to help man or beast if he chooses. But I had better not take a dog to the place, or it will put out old Bristles as well as his master. Here, Jim! Good dog, come here!'

I could not help a little cry, for I could only limp when I tried to run, and the movement hurt my shoulder.

'Lucky we are not all more hurt,' said Pat, making a bandage of his handkerchief and winding it round his hand. 'The shots that struck us harmlessly might just as well have blinded me—or one of the poor animals either. It was a careless job shooting so near the road, and it seems odd that the man who did it, whether he is gamekeeper or gentleman, doesn't come forward to see what harm he has done; he must have seen the bird fall,' and Pat peeped inquisitively into the wood. But a dead silence had fallen upon it, broken only by the sound of distant shots.

Pat led Jenny and me to a little wooden gate, and when we had all passed through he shut it again, and tied me loosely to the post.

'All right, Jim,' he nodded, kindly. 'Stay you there; I will be back in a minute.'

Pat was soon out of sight, leading Jenny up the narrow woodland track, across which hazel-bushes almost met, overhanging a tangled border of brambles.

All was as quiet as the grave for a few minutes. Then I heard a man's voice say, in low tones, 'Is he gone?' Next came a sound like that of smothered laughter.

'Yes; you have hit the donkey and the dog—and the man too, I believe. Won't there be a row?'

'Not if you don't split,' was the answer, as the figure of a young man rose from the brushwood where he had been hiding.

'I shall tell no tales, Eversley, and I take it that you won't for your own sake. I told you you were running it too close, you know, picking out that bird just over the donkey's ears.'

'Nonsense! Only a donkey! What does it matter?'

'Well, I don't know; it's only a man, if you come to that, and only a dog. You damaged all three. I should clear off, Eversley, unless you mean to own up like a man.'

'Stuff! The donkey shouldn't have come knocking up against my shots. Hark! isn't that some one coming?'

'Yes, the man's coming back. He is not much

"'You have hit the dog.'"

hurt this time, anyway; but, talking of murder, you might have been the death of him.'

'I shall keep dark,' said Rupert Eversley, and all was silent again.

Pat now approached and untied me. 'Come along, Jim,' he said. 'Daddy Pinch is friendly, and so, I hope, will Bristles be.'

Kind Pat led me up the path, which ended in a neat patch of garden ground. Here stood a tiny thatched cottage, trim and trig as a bee-hive. At the door was a white-headed old man, whose pointed nose, cunning face, and twinkling eyes reminded me of a raven, and by his side an old yellow dog, several sizes larger than myself, who made himself very stiff about the legs, and pretended not to see me as we came up.

This was old Daddy Pinch and his dog Bristles, who lived alone together and kept their own secrets. They were an odd couple, and puzzled everybody. Daddy had been a soldier and a sailor, a policeman, a doctor's servant, and a groom. Also he had served with credit as a postman, and enjoyed more than one snug little pension.

There seemed to be nothing that Daddy Pinch could not do. Though fairly well-to-do, he was fond of earning a few pence at any time, but his favourite work seemed to be finding out what other people wanted to hide. He was always poking and prying here and there, and Bristles seemed to be tarred with the same brush.

Often when you thought nobody was near, even in the middle of a lonely field, Bristles would suddenly start up; or, on some empty stretch of high road, lo and behold, he would seem to drop from the clouds! and you would find, somewhere near him, Daddy Pinch, doing a job of hedging and ditching, or a bit of mowing or potato-digging, or else taking a nap in the sunshine, just in the last place where you would expect to find him.

(*Continued on page* 285.)

HOW THE RENT WAS PAID.

'OH, Mrs. Carter, what do you think Grandfather has sent me for my birthday?'

'I don't know, my dear, I am sure.'

'Why, a whole two-shilling piece, to spend as I please; isn't it jolly?'

'Yes, my dear, I should think it is; it almost makes me wish *I* had a grandfather to give me a birthday present.' And Ann Carter's toil-worn face relaxed into a smile as she spoke.

'He would be pretty old by this time, wouldn't he?' said little Nellie Summers, with a laugh.

'Yes, close on a hundred,' was the reply; 'but there, my dear, I am forgetting to wish you many happy returns of the day—I *do* wish them with all my heart.'

'I know you do, Mrs. Carter,' cried Nellie, flinging her arms around the good woman's neck.

Nellie had every reason to be fond of Mrs. Carter, for the kindly soul had once helped to nurse her through an attack of scarlet fever, when nearly every one else in the village was afraid to venture near. Mrs. Carter was a widow, who lived in a tiny

"'I shall sell out in a few minutes, if I go on like this.'"

cottage near Nellie's home. Nellie often ran in to see her on her way to school, and whenever there was an opportunity of showing the woman a kindness, Nellie was to the fore.

It was not till she was just about to say good-bye, that Nellie noticed that something was wrong with her friend, and that tears were very near the surface.

'Aren't you well, Mrs. Carter?' said she; 'you look as if something was the matter.'

'Well,' was the answer, 'I am in a bit of trouble this morning, I am sorry to say.'

And then it all came out. Her son, who was a gardener near London, had been out of work for some time past, and so was unable to help her with her rent. Consequently, she was several weeks in arrears, and the landlord, a stern, money-loving man, had given her notice to quit.

Nellie's eyes filled with tears of sympathy, and eagerly she proffered her two shillings as a gift towards the rent.

But Mrs. Carter, grateful as she was, absolutely refused to accept it.

'No, my dear,' she said, 'I wouldn't take your birthday present for the world. I am as grateful as can be for the offer, you know that. And now, Miss Nellie, I don't wish to hurry you, but you must be off, or you will be late for school.'

The ringing of the village school bell told Nellie that Mrs. Carter spoke the truth, and with an affectionate 'good-bye,' she hurried off.

During school hours that morning, a brilliant idea came into Nellie's mind, and as soon as lessons were over she called a big council of her girl-friends together. She first told them of Mrs. Carter's troubles, and then asked their help in making two shillings grow into ten.

'I should like to see how it's going to be done,' said one of them.

'Then you shall,' cried Nellie, her eyes sparkling with excitement. 'On our school-treat day next week I am going to stock Mrs. Carter with as many flowers as she can sell, and I want you all to spend at least a penny with her.'

Nellie's father, be it said, was a florist, and possessed a large garden, and she felt sure that for two shillings he would give her an abundance of summer flowers.

The girls, entering into the kindly spirit of the whole affair, readily promised to do their best, as did also Nellie's father, when she broached the subject that same evening.

The long-looked-for day of the school-treat dawned as bright and fair as any one could desire. Boys and girls, in holiday trim, marched in high glee to the pretty grounds where the annual festival took place, and were soon enjoying themselves to their hearts' content. Eagerly little Nellie Summers looked around to see if Mrs. Carter was there, according to arrangements, with her basket of flowers.

Yes, there she was, near the tea-gardens, in a clean white apron and sun-bonnet, looking as spick and span as could be.

A crowd had already gathered around the flower-sellers, for the school girls were, every one of them, true to their promises.

More than half the basketful was sold before Nellie could draw near, coin in hand.

Mrs. Carter picked out the very choicest bunch for her kind little friend, and, the purchase complete, Nellie asked her how she was getting on.

'Splendidly, little Missie,' was the answer. 'I shall sell out in a few minutes, if I go on like this.'

'That's right! Father is going to send you round just as many as ever you want,' said Nellie, delightedly.

At this moment the child turned round, and saw the Squire's daughter, Miss Heritage, looking on with a smile on her face.

She had heard from one of the girls of Nellie's act of kindness, and was anxious to do *her* part in helping to pay the widow's rent.

When it came to Miss Heritage's turn to purchase a bunch of flowers, to Ann Carter's surprise and gratitude, a gold half-sovereign was left in her hand in exchange.

'I don't want any change,' said Miss Heritage, with a smile, 'nor thanks either. You owe it all to little Nellie Summers, it was she who set me the example.'

Nellie, who was standing close by, blushed a rose pink at these words, but looked, oh! so happy.

Basketful after basketful was very soon sold, and when tea-time drew near, Mrs. Carter, with the aid of Nellie and Miss Heritage, counted out her store of coins. She had actually taken more than enough to pay her overdue rent! Added to this, Miss Heritage promised that Mrs. Carter's son should find work on her father's estate; so it was little wonder that the good woman's cup of happiness was filled to the brim. All she could say in thanks to her two kind friends, was a tremulous 'God bless you;' but somehow both Miss Heritage and little Nellie Summers were more than satisfied with that.

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 271.)

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE feelings of the sergeant upon recovering from his deep sleep of the previous evening may be imagined. His first discovery was disagreeable enough — the letter-case, containing Paul's money, had disappeared. He accused the Starost, his host, but that worthy was still too dazed from the effects of his carouse to be able to give any sensible reply to the questions put to him. The sergeant's second discovery was even more disagreeable; for presently the two soldiers placed in charge of the prisoners came, pale, frightened, incoherent, and stammering, to report that the captives had fled; they had broken out of the fast-bolted room in which they had been confined, had stolen two horses, and decamped. The peasant-owner of the hut had slept in the cowhouse, and knew nothing. Unfortunately, Mitka added, trembling with terror, both he and Spiridon had slept very soundly also, owing to the poisonous quality of certain food and liquor provided for them at supper.

The quarrels of the sergeant and his men need not further concern us; sufficient that there was much to be said on both sides, and that it was said with plenty of vigour. An hour later the chase recommenced.

Meanwhile Paul and the Eagle travelled eastward through Siberia, heading away from home, well knowing that their late captors would be more

likely to pursue in the opposite direction. Their position was now much more hopeful, inasmuch as they were mounted, Paul had recovered his money, or most of it, and the revolvers, upon which so much might depend in case of a surprise, were once more in the belts of their owners.

So for a week the brothers travelled eastward without interference. At a village on the route they sold the Cossack ponies and bought others, for the Cossack animals were branded, and might be recognised as Government property. There was now nothing to show that our two fugitives were not private persons travelling towards Manchuria, and, in so far as recapture by the sergeant was concerned, there was certainly no further danger.

'We must have an excuse ready, though,' said Paul, 'in case of curiosity on the part of officials; for, after all, we have no passports. Now, I suggest that we give ourselves out as intending volunteers for the war. Volunteering, every one says, is the easiest possible thing at present; there are scarcely any formalities, because soldiers on the spot are badly needed.'

'How far are we away from the war-zone now?' asked the Eagle, open-mouthed.

'Seven or eight hundred miles,' said Paul.

'But these ponies will never carry us!'

'Of course not. We shall take the train presently. As intending volunteers, the military trains will take us in, though as private travellers they might not. In a few days our ponies will have had enough of it, and then we will make for the railway.'

The volunteering plan commended itself to the Eagle, who delighted in war. 'We will not only say we will volunteer, but we will do it, and see a bit of fighting,' he said; but Paul was not quite responsive on that score. 'We should have to be in the ranks,' he said, 'and it wouldn't be particularly pleasant. However, we shall see what happens. At any rate, if we are asked questions, we are both patriotic individuals, dying to volunteer in the service of the Tsar. That's our line for the present.'

The programme was rigidly adhered to. At the villages in which the fugitives rested there were many curious persons, who desired to know whither the travellers were speeding, and for these the volunteering fiction seemed quite convincing. At this time officers were recruiting volunteers—so greatly were soldiers in request—even from the convict prisons.

At the end of a fortnight of travelling the ponies were in need of a long rest, and it was decided to make for the railway, sell the weary animals, and take the train. The fugitives were now not very far from the Manchurian frontier, and, having disposed of their mounts, they made a few purchases of necessary clothing, and presently appeared at the railway station. Here they intended to take tickets to Harbin, but the booking-clerk first inquired their business there, a question which annoyed Paul. He replied, curtly, that whatever his business might be it was certainly no concern of the booking-clerk's.

'Well, that depends,' said that individual; 'for, as it happens, I am not allowed at present to sell tickets to any excepting those concerned in some way or other with the war. There's no room in the trains for ordinary travellers, and no use for them at Harbin.'

'Oh, if that's the case,' said Paul, 'I may tell you that we intend to volunteer.'

'Then you're a lucky fellow,' said the booking-clerk, 'for there's a man on the platform at this moment with a gang of recruits for the Siberian Volunteer regiment, and you will get your journey for nothing, instead of having to pay for it!'

Having thus declared himself a would-be volunteer, Paul could scarcely withdraw from the position, especially as the clerk now called to a porter.

'Donskoy,' he said, 'take these two young fellows to Sergeant Kirilof; they want to volunteer.'

Donskoy conducted the fugitives upon the platform, crowded with soldiers and others, for the train would stand at the station while the soldiers ate their dinner of hot cabbage soup and black bread, served out to them from huge iron receivers. The sergeant, Kirilof, was busy superintending the feeding of his contingent of volunteers, a hundred noisy fellows, for the most part of the criminal type, and evidently ex-convicts, who had served their time in various Siberian prisons.

'You look a likely pair,' said Kirilof. Glancing a second time at Paul, he added, 'We are a pretty rough lot here, as you see, and I should say you are accustomed to the refinements of life. Why are you volunteering?'

'One doesn't mind a bit of roughing it for the sake of Tsar and country,' said Paul, making the best of the position.

'Good; that's the right spirit. Well, we want officers, and I expect you will soon move up. I dare say you're an ex-convict, like most of us.'

'I dare say,' laughed Paul, 'or I shouldn't be so far from home.'

'Well, that's not my business. Have your dinner, if you want it. We shall be off in ten minutes. You can travel in my carriage until the next stop, and I shall have you make the oath of allegiance, and take down your names *en route*. The train cannot be delayed here. You are prepared, I suppose, to take the oath?'

'Most certainly,' laughed Paul. 'We are his Majesty's most humble and most faithful well-wishers, though the Tsar and we may differ as to his treatment of us.'

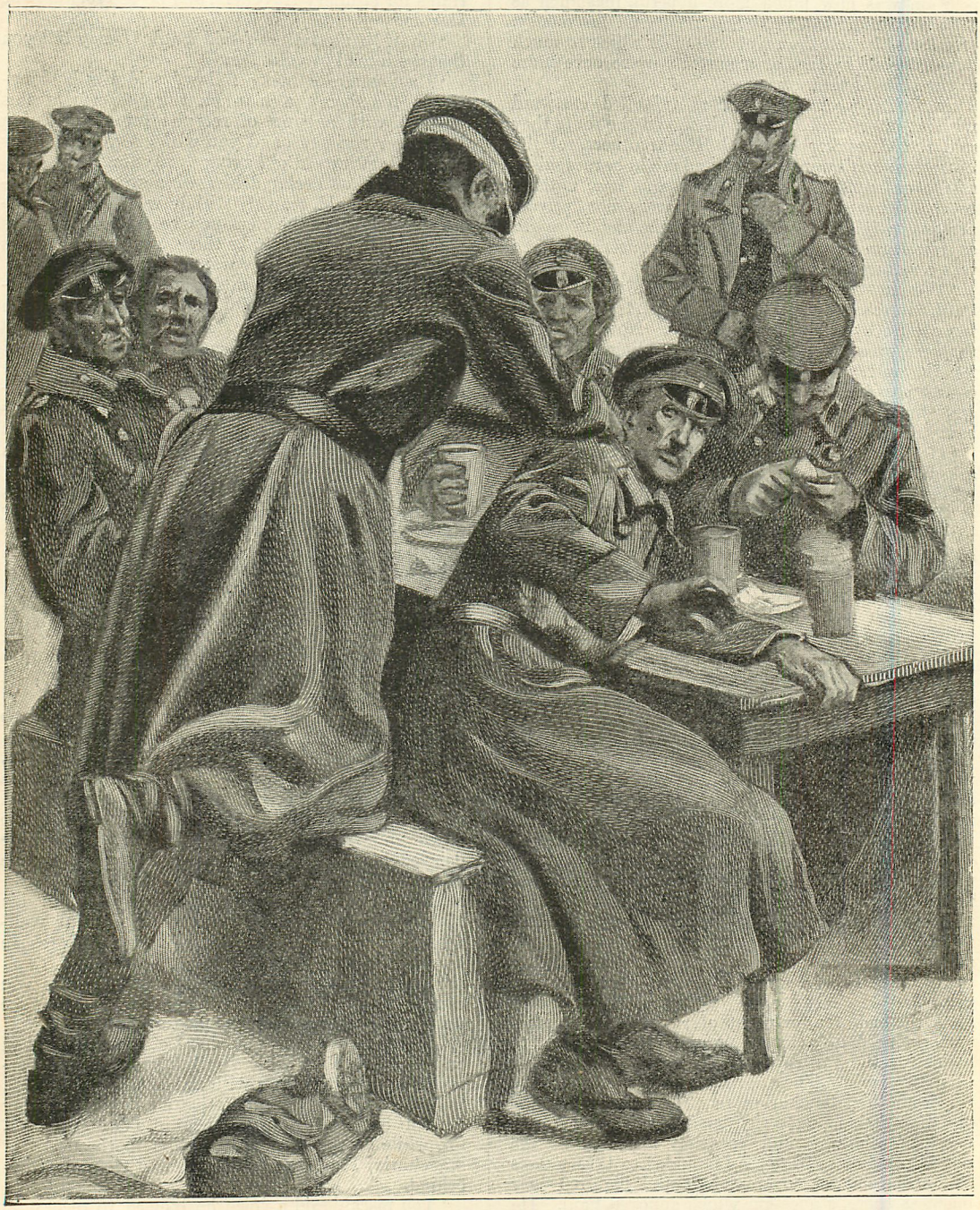
'Well, get your share of the eatables, while you can,' ended the officer, bustling off to see to some duty at the station-master's office.

The fugitives took their share of soup and bread and were supplied with a military outfit, and presently boarded the train with the rest.

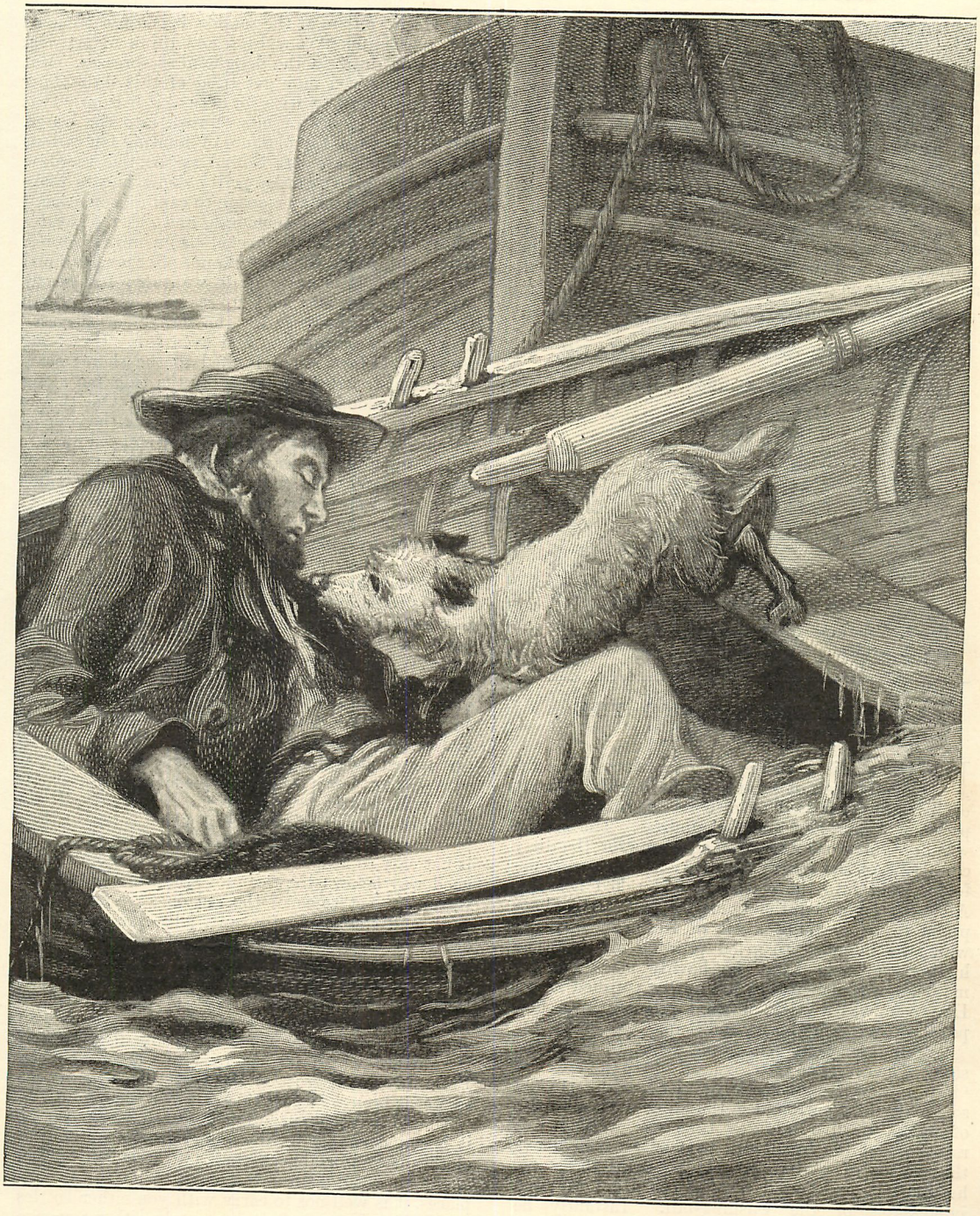
It was early next morning that a new and startling incident once more plunged them into deadly danger, for, while breakfasting at a station in the north of Manchuria, Paul was suddenly seized violently from behind.

'You rascal,' said a voice he seemed to recognise, 'I have got you, have I? I heard of your escape. This is an escaped prisoner, sergeant, and a most dangerous character. I claim him in the Tsar's name!'

(*Continued on page* 283.)



"'I have got you, have I? This is an escaped prisoner.'"



"The dog began to tug at his coat."

SAVED BY A DOG.

MANY years ago a Thames waterman was sleeping in his boat near Hammersmith, when, just as the tide was turning, and the water began to ebb, the boat broke from its moorings and drifted away. It was carried along so silently by the tide that the man was not roused, but slept on while the boat was caught under the bows of a barge, and began to fill with water. But fortunately the man had his dog with him in the boat, and the faithful animal saw the danger which threatened its sleeping master. It began to tug at the collar of his coat, and gently scratched his face. By these means it succeeded in waking him, and the man was able to save the boat and escape from drowning.

PUZZLERS FOR WISE HEADS.

9.—Anagrams—Common Things.

1. A meal dram.
2. I to a cap.
3. I wolf clear U.
4. No tea for I. P.
5. O! I to blame U.
6. I! No, no.

C. J. B.

[*Answers on page* 322.]

Answer to Puzzle on Page 250.

8.—1. Coleridge. 2. Crabbe. 3. Hood. 4. Shelley. 5. Cowley.

LITHOGRAPHY AND THE LAUNDRESS.

PATIENCE is a virtue, yet impatience has occasionally been of service to the world. The art of lithography is said to owe its origin to the impatience of Mrs. Senefelder's laundress. The woman was in a hurry one day when she came for the dirty clothes. As the list was not made out, Mrs. Senefelder went into the workshop and asked her son, Alois, to jot down the items for her. Alois happened to be cleaning a bit of Kellheim stone on which he intended to grind printing ink. As he had no paper at hand, he hastily made out his mother's washing-list on his newly polished stone. His 'pen' was a stick of solid printing ink, composed of wax, lamp-black, and soap.

A few days later Alois was about to clean the stone, when it came into his head to try the effect of 'biting' it with aqua fortis or nitric acid. He did so, having first surrounded the stone with a border of wax. In five minutes' time the writing was raised about the hundredth part of an inch above the surface of the stone. Having dried the stone, he inked it, and found that he could get reversed impressions of the washing-bill. Instantly he realised the value of this discovery. He worked hard, and in a short time perfected a system of lithography which has been a boon to the world.

SEAWEED COLLECTING.

WHEN you are at the seaside, it is often pleasant to lie upon your back and think of nothing, while you draw in the delightful sea-breezes. But after a time you may get tired of this do-nothing state, and begin to wish for action, if it is only that of throwing stones or bits of rock into the water. But there is also the pleasure of hunting for various objects which are left behind as the tide recedes; some places give us many pretty shells, mostly without tenants. We may manage to capture some small fish, little crabs, sea-anemones, and other creatures whose home is in the ocean, or upon its shores. Some spots along the coast do not offer much animal life, though it is never quite wanting; but nearly everywhere we may pick up seaweed, and a search for what somebody calls 'the flowers of the sea' may give us occupation, and even fun. Collecting seaweeds, in fact, is not limited to the shore; some of them are carried up rivers by the tide, but along these we seldom find any choice kinds. One that is familiar to most of us is the bladder-wrack, the vesicles of which make a popping noise when stepped upon.

The force of the waves brings along bunches of seaweed many miles from the place where they first grew, and deep-water species are sometimes drifted to the shores, on which we can get them without the trouble of dredging the bottom. When we are seaweed collecting, we search, of course, not only for that which has been floated up, but still more for what is to be found growing on rocks or banks, and is exposed to view as the water goes out. Walking beside a shelving rock, one thing we are sure to notice is how the colour of a seaweed is affected by the position of the plant. About high-water mark, green, the colour of vegetation on land, is conspicuous; lower down seaweed takes an olive tint, and deepest is that of a red colour. These two hues are caused by reduced sunlight, and if olive or red seaweeds are taken home, and placed in fresh water, they will shortly become green. Few seaweeds are found in any part of the ocean which is deeper than four hundred feet, just because light is wanting. It is not easy to keep seaweeds that have come from a good way below; they cannot stand much light or warmth. Yet some of the red ones are most beautiful, and composed of a soft, jelly-like substance; others of the olive colour are very different, being hard or horny, but of fine growth. Again, there are seaweeds which grow upon the stems of stronger, larger species, forming a sort of delicate fringe. Besides the conspicuous seaweeds, the ocean has an enormous quantity of very tiny plants, floating near the surface, which furnish food to marine animals. From June to August is the best time to seek the seaweeds brought up by tides.

Should you be purposing a search for seaweeds, it is not desirable to dress smartly—an old suit of clothes is comfortable as well as convenient. Then about an outfit: since you have to go in slippery places, it is well not to carry with you either bottles or a knife. Instead of these you take either a sponge bag or tin can to hold your specimens, a stick of convenient length, one end having a chisel-edge to detach the seaweed, the other being furnished with a

screw by which a net can be fixed. This net enables us to secure plants growing at the bottom or sides of pools. Some people put them into a salt-water aquarium, but only a few kinds will thrive. It is more usual to mount the specimens taken. The first thing to be done is to dry them with blotting-paper; it is necessary to put muslin between the plants and the blotting paper. This must be changed several times, and no pressure must be given until the moisture has been almost removed.

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 279.)

CHAPTER XXXII.

PAUL turned and faced the speaker, expecting for a moment to see the Sergeant of Cossacks, in whose power he had been a fortnight before. But this was not the sergeant; Paul remembered the man in a moment. It was the captain of the convict escort, under whose charge he had travelled originally from St. Petersburg—Grozny.

'Who are you?' said Paul, regaining his composure in a moment. 'By what right do you abuse me before my companions? Prove your assertion.'

Grozny took no notice of the remark. 'I claim that man, sergeant, in the Tsar's name; he's an escaped convict. He was in my charge. I left him at Yermatsky. I have, I say, a letter from the Governor announcing his escape.'

'That is nothing to me even if he be so,' said the sergeant. 'He is serving the Tsar as a volunteer. Attend to your gang, Mr. Officer, and learn to mind your own business. He may have been a convict sixfold, for all I care; he is now enrolled in my regiment—let him be, if you please.'

'I am your superior officer,' cried Grozny. 'I will teach you that a sergeant does not speak thus to a captain in the Tsar's army.'

The Eagle suddenly stepped forward, inspired by an idea. 'The officer does not know what he is talking about, sergeant,' he said. 'What if I were to tell you, Mr. Captain, that *I* happen to be the man who travelled in your gang—not this one?'

Grozny turned and faced the last speaker, intending to give him the lie direct, but, upon seeing the Eagle, started back in sudden surprise. The sergeant saw the start and laughed, so did Paul, so did the Eagle.

'You see,' said the latter, 'how easily mistakes may be made. He now recognises me; just now he recognised this other volunteer. It is clear, sergeant, that the poor fellow has lost a convict, and is anxious to fill the gap lest he should get into trouble.'

The volunteers all laughed; the convict gang—those of them who dared—joined in the laughter. Grozny stamped with rage.

'I am sure it was one of the two,' he said, 'probably the one I first spoke to. It is not my fault if the rascal happens to have found another rascal so like himself as to be mistaken for him.'

'Nonsense,' said Paul. 'This is my brother. We were travelling together from a certain place in the Yermatsky district in order to reach the seat of war, intending to volunteer, when we fell in with the recruiting sergeant. Look after your convicts, officer! Why, see, is not one of them aiming something at you?'

'Who? where?' exclaimed Grozny, paling, and turning quickly round.

The scene was exactly similar to that enacted on a former occasion when Paul had played the same trick upon the nervous officer; he burst out laughing. Grozny flushed up; he evidently remembered the incident thus recalled just as clearly as Paul did. He stamped and shouted, 'Sergeant, I command you to deliver up this man to me; in the name of the Tsar, I demand it.'

'In the name of the Tsar, I refuse,' said the sergeant. 'There is a mistake here, but in any case I should refuse your demand. I am a recruiting sergeant, and I am privileged as well as my volunteers. For all I know, half my men may be escaped convicts; they will not fight the Tsar's enemies any the worse for that. Into the train, all! attention! left, right, march!'

Grozny and his gang, who had been turned out of the train in order to make room for stores awaiting entrainment at this station, was left fuming and threatening upon the platform as the engine dragged its heavy burden past him.

Paul squeezed his head out of the window, and Grozny saw him and shook his fist.

'This is not the end,' he shouted. 'If the Japanese bullets don't end you, you shall go to the mines for this.'

'See that dark-looking ruffian behind you, Grozny!' cried Paul; 'look at his revolver!'

'Who? where?' screamed Grozny, turning.

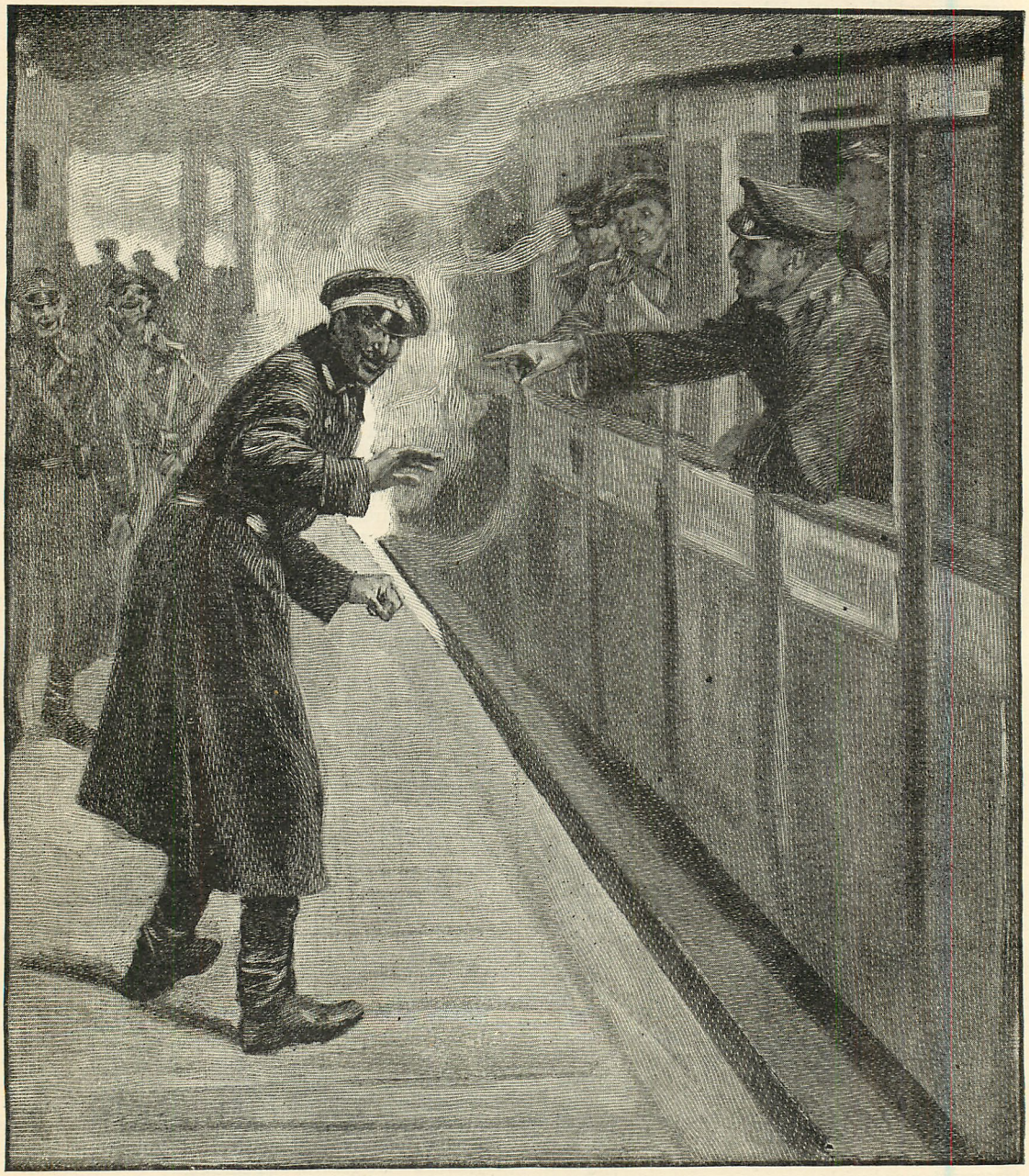
It was ridiculous. Peals of laughter floated back from Paul's moving train. Grozny's soldiers turned away their smiling faces; the more desperate of his convicts made no attempt to conceal their delight.

'Good-bye,' shouted Paul; 'it is so kind of you to have recognised an old friend.'

The train passed out of sight, and the incident was closed; but Paul was presently invited by his sergeant to furnish a full and particular account of the matter, and the accurate version of the affair which he now made over so greatly amused and delighted the officer that both Paul and the Eagle became favoured members of the company from the very first. When he found that Paul was a moneyed man and an aristocrat, the sergeant was politeness and kindness itself, and many were the indulgences enjoyed by our two fugitives, thanks once more to Paul's well-stocked letter-case. The twins soon became, moreover, prime favourites with their fellows, and when, after a month or two of training at Harbin, both received their promotion as non-commissioned officers in the Siberian Volunteers, the rejoicings were general and sincere.

Within a few months of their promotion the brothers took part in the first battle of the war, the Battle of the Yalu, disastrous for the Russians, but glorious for the Japanese; and, though Paul had at first felt somewhat divided in his sympathies between Japan and Russia, being himself half English, the defeat of his own side was a terrible blow both to him and to the Eagle, who knew little of the rights and wrongs of the struggle.

Officers, sergeants, and all ranks had much to say



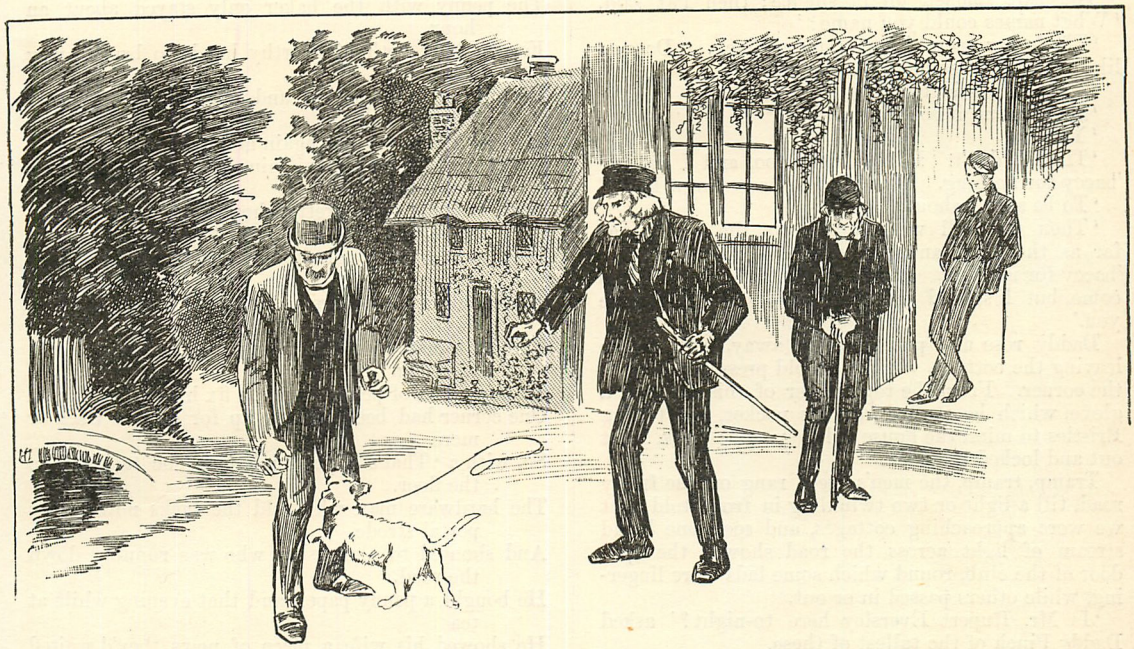
"'Who? where?' screamed Grozny."

of the battle, and of the events, naval and military, which led up to it. Most of those taking part in conversations upon these painful subjects put down all the misfortunes of the Russians to the craft and cunning of the Japanese, who had stolen a march on the Tsar's people, declaring war before Russia was prepared to fight, and sinking her ships before the Russian Admiral well knew that the war had begun.

'The more fools we for not being prepared,' said Paul. 'You can't blame the Japanese; they were too clever for us, simply. Give them their due.'

'We shall give them their due when Kuropatkin comes out,' said the others. 'Let them have their fling for a week or two; our time will come!'

(*Continued on page* 290.)



"I flung myself at him."

NOBODY'S DOG.

(*Continued from page* 276.)

EVERYBODY put up with Daddy Pinch's queerness, because he was good at heart. There was hardly any simple illness which he could not and would not cure without cost to the sufferer. Little children crying with the toothache never appealed to him in vain, and for the ills of old age he felt an equal compassion. No one was too sick or too poor for his consideration, and he would tend an animal as gladly as a man. With ready skill he now examined our hurts, pronounced that no shots remained in the wounds, and treated the slight hurts with lotion and ointment of his own preparation. Then he put Jenny to bed in a clean outhouse.

Bristles looked on in a condescending manner while this was done. I only knew him by hearsay, but Stubby, who was his intimate friend, had long ago told me that Bristles was not so haughty as he seemed.

'He looks like a fighting dog, but that way he has of sticking up the hair on his back, glaring with his eyes, and coming along in that mincing manner, is merely for show. His bark is worse than his bite; he is a capital fellow when you come to know him,' Stubby had said. So I felt no alarm when Bristles considered it necessary to sniff every hair of my head separately before giving a single wag of his tail.

'Take care of him, Bristles,' said Daddy Pinch, and old Bristles, the gruff and grim, with a patronising air, led me to a corner of the hut, and stood over me while I ate a dishful of oatmeal, flavoured with rabbit broth, which I found very refreshing.

Daddy Pinch looked on. 'Old Bristles never had a day's illness in his life,' he said, 'and he's over eighteen years of age now. I put it down to the careful way in which he has been fed, and never physicked. The vets always say, one-third meat, one-third vegetables, and one-third floury food, such as oatmeal-biscuits or the like, mixed together, is what suits a dog best, and they are in the right. But a dog wants to be watched and his food changed as often as may be, according to the state of his health, the weather, and so on. Though I never allow him bones *as food*, the old chap has always a large marrow-bone or a leg-of-mutton bone to gnaw at just for amusement, and to keep his teeth clean. Yes, old Bristles looks for his bone much as I do for my pipe. I don't swallow my pipe, and he doesn't swallow his bone, but we each find it a deal of comfort.'

As evening approached, and it was determined that we should stay to rest the night, Daddy Pinch lighted a cheerful little fire. The two old men sat one on each side of it, while I lay in comfort at their feet, my chin resting on the back of Bristles.

'That was a near shave you had,' said Daddy Pinch. 'Whoever fired that shot did a dirty trick to slink away and never come and see the damage done.' Knocking the ashes from his pipe, with a sidelong glance at Pat, he added, 'There's things done without hands about here—dirty tricks. I name no names *yet*.'

The pair smoked on in silence; then Pat said, 'What names could you name?'

'That's my secret,' said Daddy Pinch. 'Do you like 'baccy?' he suddenly broke off.

'Yes, I do,' said Pat.

'Do you find it come expensive?'

'Yes.'

'Then I don't. I like 'baccy too, and I get my 'baccy for nothing. Would you like to know how?'

'To be sure I should.'

'Then we will walk down to the village as far as the club, and you shall see how I get my 'baccy for nothing. It will do the little dog good to come, but I should put the lead on him if I were you.'

Daddy rose and put his pipe away, and, before leaving the cottage, went to an old press standing in the corner. From the top drawer of this he took a glove, which he stuffed into his pocket, and telling Bristles to mind the house till they came back, went out and locked the door.

Tramp, tramp, the men's steps rang on the frosty road, till a light or two twinkling in front told that we were approaching cottages, and soon one broad stream of light across the road showed the open door of the club, round which some lads were lingering, while others passed in or out.

'Is Mr. Rupert Eversley here to-night?' asked Daddy Pinch of the tallest of these.

'Yes, he is.'

'Tell him I want to speak to him.'

'Tell Mr. Eversley that old Daddy Pinch wants to speak to him! Perhaps you think he will come out?'

'Yes, I do,' said Pinch quietly. 'You tell him, anyhow.'

The lad went off, thinking it a good joke. In a moment, Rupert Eversley, looking very pale, stood at the top of the steps.

'What do you want?' he said.

'My 'baccy is getting low, sir. I am sure such a generous young gentleman as you won't see any old man want his pipe.' Daddy's hand stole into his pocket, into which he had pushed the glove. He now drew it partly out.

Rupert's eye rested on it, and, quickly taking out his purse, he handed Daddy Pinch a shilling. I could not notice what followed, for at the same instant I saw somebody passing along the road, somebody I knew. Springing forward, and half pulling Pat down the steps as I wrenched myself from him, string and all, I rushed and flung myself at the figure, and found myself once more in the arms of Luke Bramble, the mason.

(*Continued on page* 294.)

THE STORY OF A PENNY.

IT was handed to a beggar as he rested in the sun:
He took it to a baker's shop, and bought a penny bun.
The bun was what he wanted, and I'm very glad to say
It satisfied his hunger, for it drove it quite away.
The penny with the baker only stayed about an hour,
For, rubbing both his worthy hands to brush away the flour,
He put one in his pocket, and, with smiles of honest joy,
He took the penny out again and gave it to his boy.
Away went happy Benjamin (they called him so, I'm told),
And, tripping to a pretty shop where pretty books were sold,
He bought a penny volume that had won his teacher's praise,
And read it with extreme delight for many, many days.
The book-man took the penny, and he stepped into the town
To buy a box of penny tacks to fix his carpet down.
One corner had been curling up for quite a week or more,
So, with a 'That's a good job done,' he tacked it to the floor.
The hardware man who sold the tacks now to his portal strode,
And shouted to a newsboy who was running down the road.
He bought a penny paper, and that evening while at tea
He showed his wife a piece of news they'd waited long to see.
The newsboy took the penny, and, just pausing as he ran,
He bought a hot potato from a hot-potato man;
For when the night is chilly, and the finger-tips are cold,
A smoking hot potato is a splendid thing to hold.
And the newsboy grasped it tightly with a feeling of content,
And munched the great brown 'jacket' as on his way he went.
But see! the night is falling, and the day is nearly done—
We must not follow farther in the journey thus begun.
Enough if we have noticed that a penny rightly spent
May bring, in every change it makes, a harvest of content.
And let us all remember, when we store it safe away,
It's only ours to use again as wisely as we may.

AN ESCAPE FROM A CROCODILE.

SELDOM, indeed, does a crocodile relinquish its prey when once its powerful jaws have closed upon its victim; but a story comes from East Africa of a native who had an extraordinary escape from one of these reptiles. He was a Soudanese bugler, who was bathing in the river early one morning, when one of his companions saw a large crocodile emerge from the water, seize the bugler by the body, and carry him off into the middle of the river. He was given up for lost, and none of his companions ever expected to see him again; but two days later he was discovered lying on the beach, three miles away, with the waves washing over him. It does not

appear that he was seriously injured, but all he could remember of what happened was his being seized by the crocodile and carried down the river towards the sea. When he recovered consciousness, he found himself on the seashore, but what caused the crocodile to spare him must ever remain a mystery.

ROUND THE CAMP-FIRE.

I.—RALPH'S LITTLE NIGGER.

(*Concluded from page* 263.)

MR. TAYLOR allowed Momba to remain. He consulted with the Head, and with the prefects of his house, and it was unanimously agreed that the boy should be given a chance. Deprived of his horrible poison-dagger, he would not, it was thought, be dangerous.

'If he loses his temper, we are quite able to take care of ourselves,' said his schoolfellows. 'We are not afraid of him!' And the Head expressed his opinion that boys might, as a rule be trusted to bring down any rebellious lad of their own kind to his own level.

'Come in a month,' said Mr. Taylor, 'and see how he is getting on.'

I went in a month, and stopped a day or two. Momba was delighted to see me, but this time I fancy the Captain of the cricket eleven, and one or two other shining lights in the school were greater heroes than myself in his eyes. The house master gave a good report of him; there had only been one serious lapse into savagery. Some one had offended Momba at the bathing-place, and Momba had done his best, in a fit of anger, to drown the offender. He had dived, caught hold of his victim's legs, and pulled him under, keeping him down in defiance of his frantic kicks and struggles, until he was almost drowned, when, fortunately, a second good swimmer came to the rescue, and, being fresh while Momba was almost as exhausted as his victim, he succeeded in saving the latter by dragging Momba away. Both parties had to be assisted ashore, so nearly had the struggle ended in suffocation.

Momba had shown much contrition for his offence, the master explained; he had prostrated himself at his offender's feet, and put dust on his head; afterwards he had bought a new cricket ball and presented it to him. He had been forgiven and taken into renewed favour by the house. He was, indeed, rather a favourite in the school, and said Mr. Taylor, 'he shows signs of developing into a good cricketer; his eye is like a hawk's, and he has no fear; you may bowl at his legs, but he won't budge—even for Evans's balls, which come in like lightning!'

Well, things went well enough for a couple of years. At the end of the first year, there came a deputation from his father, in order to see and report upon the well-being of his Royal Highness Momba. The three swarthy Bantu warriors created quite a sensation in the school. I was present to assist at their reception. They saw Momba play cricket, and evinced a desire to 'go for' the opposing eleven when their chief's son received a ball on the ankle and was made to skip about the field with pain. They actually went so far as to walk into the field, filled, I think, with vindictive intentions towards his opponents; but Momba, ashamed of their foolishness, sent them back with haughty, scornful words, and the good fellows returned to my side, satisfied, indeed, that all was well, but much bewildered. Momba sent a letter to his father, written half in English and half in the Zulu dialect. He declared that he was well and happy and had learned much. 'I hope to be in the eleven in two years,' he added. This last communication must have puzzled his royal father not a little.

Occasionally, I was told, Momba still suffered from paroxysms of anger. On such occasions he was always, to a certain extent, dangerous; but the school was, as a whole, used to him, and took care to watch him in moments of excitement.

At the end of the second year he was quite a popular character; he played for his house eleven, and was one of the most promising young 'halves' at Rugby football that the school had yet produced.

I received an invitation from his father, to stay for a few months at his kraal, at this time. 'You shall do as you think best as to Momba,' he wrote. 'If he is doing well, let him stay; if he does not learn the civilisation of the English, let him return with you.'

I consulted with the house master.

'Well,' said Mr. Taylor, 'it is a matter of opinion. If cricket and football and a little Greek and Latin and arithmetic are civilisation, he is certainly progressing admirably; but, on the other hand, he still retains that instinct of the savage nature, to avenge comparatively trifling offences by murderous assaults.' Mr. Taylor then informed me how Momba had lately startled the entire school by suddenly 'going for' the referee at a football match, because the unfortunate individual had three times pulled him up for 'off-side.' Momba tried to suffocate the offender, and for this piece of savagery came in danger of expulsion. It was only in consequence of a petition from the entire school, who seemed to be strangely attached to him, that he was forgiven.

Eventually (Ralph ended) having passed through the perils of four years' schooling without having committed a single murder, Momba left Atfield, and is now at his father's kraal, civilising his Bantu subjects to the best of his powers. I saw him two years ago; he was then about twenty years of age, and he told me that he had taught his fellows cricket and football, and that he intended before long to bring an eleven down to Bulawayo, where one of his old schoolfellows is a bank clerk, and offers to get up a match. He seriously contemplates a tour to England one day, in order to measure his Bantus, both in cricket and football, against medium English teams. He has actually affected the King, old Umbana, with a liking for cricket, and I have seen the old man standing up to Momba's bowling for half an hour at a time.

'My father,' Momba told me, 'would play better if he ate less beef.' The King has not yet attempted football, but he has made the game compulsory for his younger subjects.

"Momba prostrated himself at his offender's feet."

"The Chinese skipper made a sudden bolt for the door."

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 284.)

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THINGS went badly with the Russians—from bad to worse. Troops arrived in enormous numbers from Russia, but somehow a Japanese appeared for every Russian that the Tsar could put into the field, and perhaps a few more. The twins grew somewhat weary of inaction, or rather of constantly retiring before the advancing Japanese, and when the need came for reinforcements for the Port Arthur garrison, which would probably be shortly called upon to undergo a fierce siege, both brothers volunteered for service at that important centre.

The siege had not as yet begun, but the Japanese fleet was constantly on the watch on the sea side of the port, hoping to see the remnants of the Russian fleet sally forth one day to engage them in battle upon the open sea. The exit from the harbour had been blocked to a certain extent, by the sinking of merchant vessels in the narrow passage through which the Russian ships would be compelled to pass in order to reach the open sea; but one fine evening it was rumoured that on the following day certain of the Tsar's battleships and cruisers would make an attempt to sally forth and engage the enemy—if he dared to meet them.

'Oh,' groaned the Eagle, for he and Paul had little to do as yet, and time hung heavily on their hands; 'why are we not sailors, Paul? If only we could get on board something that would float, and have a look at the fun!'

'Well, why not?' said Paul; 'there are several empty junks that have run the blockade with food and stuff—look, there's one tacking out now—there will be others clearing out this afternoon, wanting to get away before the firing to-morrow. Let's see if we can charter one for a day. Come down and help me bargain. They are owned by Chinese skippers; it will simply be a matter of money!'

The owners of the junks were, as Paul said, Chinamen. Paul went down with the Eagle, and boarded one at dusk. The Chinese skipper did not greatly fancy the enterprise. 'We shall be shot,' he said, 'or blown up!' His little eyes dilated with horror.

'I suppose you are well insured,' Paul suggested. 'Come, you shall have three hundred roubles for the day's work and risk; you are just as likely to be shot or sunk by the Japs, who are blockading the port, whether you pocket my money or not.'

'That's all very fine,' said the skipper; 'I like money, but perhaps I shall make a better thing of it if I shut you up in my cabin and go ashore, and tell General Stoessel that I have a couple of deserters, or perhaps even spies, on board. Five hundred roubles would be cheap.'

'Do not be foolish,' said Paul, not in the least disconcerted. 'We are not spies, or anything else but loyal soldiers of the Tsar, in need of a little holiday. We wish to see the Japanese fleet, and watch our ships sink them, that's all. It would be a pity if you refused us; by the way, are you a married man?' Paul's revolver had suddenly made its appearance, and now lay on the table beside him. The skipper caught sight of it and made a sudden bolt for the door.

But the Eagle was upon him like a terrier upon a rabbit. He laid his big hand upon the terrified little man, and stopped him at the very door of the cabin. Down went the Chinaman upon his knees. 'Don't shoot, don't shoot!' he murmured. 'I was joking—making laughter—I am my lord's most humble servant—I kiss his toe!'

'Now listen—no foolery or treachery,' said Paul. 'Three hundred roubles is a good offer. You shall have the money if you obey orders faithfully, but evil will certainly befall you if you misbehave; one of us two will be constantly on the watch, and at the slightest sign of treachery——'

'My lord—my lord!' gasped the skipper, trembling, 'the junk and all that is in it is yours; I kiss your feet.'

'Good; now you are talking sense. Get into your cabin, and stay there until it is time to move out. In you go.'

Thus was the Chinese skipper induced to agree to Paul's terms, and during that night the twins, in their junk, passed out of Port Arthur and into the open sea, sailing without lights, taking shelter beneath the rugged coast-line under the guns of Zolotoy fort. Searchlights played about and around them half the night, but no shots were fired, fortunately, from the Russian side, and the Japanese vessels were far away out of sight.

On the following morning, early, they enjoyed a splendid spectacle. Slowly and majestically, one by one, there sailed forth through the narrow channel left open to them, the *Retvizan*, the *Petropavlofsk*, several other battleships, and a fleet of cruisers and torpedo vessels, drums beating, flags flying, bands playing—a glorious sight indeed.

'Isn't it splendid!' the Eagle gasped, flushed with delight and excitement, and Paul cordially agreed.

'Follow them,' he told the Chinese captain; 'keep within sight, if you can—the wind's fair!'

In spite of warning signals the junk kept on her course, and contrived to keep within sight of the great battleships that slid majestically forward over the waves at half-speed; she fell behind, of course, but not so far behind that the twins were unable to watch the Russian fleet, and presently to note certain columns of smoke in the far distance, which indicated the presence of other large vessels, probably the Japanese fleet.

An hour later, shots were flying; the Russians had opened fire with their big guns, but their shells fell very short. Suddenly, to the disgust of the sightseers on board the junk, the Russian fleet turned tail, and steamed quickly towards Port Arthur, pursued by the Japanese ships.

'The cowards!' Paul groaned. 'Our fellows are running away, Eagle, before even coming within range!'

As though to belie the words, the Japanese ships opened a cannonade at this very moment, and shells began to drop dangerously close to the Tsar's great battleships. Round went the junk, quick as lightning; the Chinese skipper's face was white with terror, and his teeth chattered; the junk now

travelled slowly, for the wind was less favourable for her return; the battleships rapidly overhauled her; the *Retvizan* and another large vessel, close together, passed her, shots falling at intervals about and upon them, but seeming to do little damage.

'If one of these brought up against us,' said Paul, 'we should be in queer street. How unlucky that the *Retvizan* has steered so close to us—she will draw the Jap fire on us as well as herself!'

Hardly had Paul uttered these words when the Eagle shouted, 'Look, the *Retvizan* is training a gun upon us. What on earth——'

Even before the Eagle could finish his sentence the *Retvizan* had fired two shells into the doomed junk—why or wherefore no one aboard could guess. The first of these flew screaming over-head; the second caught her full on the water-line, and in a moment the small vessel heeled over and showed signs of settling.

For a minute the surprise almost deprived the Chinamen of the power to speak or move; then there arose a clatter of tongues and a rushing hither and thither, a tumult of wailing and the wringing of hands. Amid cries and lamentations, they lowered their boat. Paul and his brother would have lent a hand, but the miserable little skipper chattered at them in his own language, abusing, threatening.

'I am ruined,' he yelled, 'and it is your fault—now you shall sink, and I shall be glad—there is no room for you in the boat. Stay here and drown! Ai yai—ai yai!'

The crew began to crowd into the small boat.

'What's to be done?' said the Eagle. 'Compel them to take us in?'

Paul shook his head. 'Not fair,' he said. 'It *is* our fault that they are in this mess, and there isn't room for all. Besides, they would probably knock us on the head if we insisted upon going with them—let them go.'

'But we shall sink in a few minutes, man,' said the Eagle, 'and these battleships evidently don't intend to trouble about us. Here, skipper, take us in, you rascal, or I will blow your head off with my revolver.'

'Nonsense, man, let him be; better take our chance on some of these packing-cases, than get mobbed by the Chinamen, as we certainly should!'

(*Continued on page* 301.)

STEPHENSON AND THE BIRDS.

GEORGE STEPHENSON, to whom we owe our railway system, one day closed a window at the top of his house, which had been for many days open on account of the hot weather. Two or three days afterwards, a bird was seen to be beating against the window, and trying in every way to break through the glass. Stephenson opened the window, and watched to see what the bird would do. It flew straight to one spot, where a nest was afterwards found. The poor bird had come too late; its brood of little ones had died, and the mother-bird was so overcome at her loss, that she spread herself over the nest and died too. Stephenson tried his utmost to restore the bird, but he could not.

UNDERGROUND HOUSES.

THE different races which inhabit the world make houses of every kind and shape, and some even live in caves and holes in the hillsides which can hardly be called houses at all. Nearly as poor as these cave-dwellers are the people who live in underground houses. These are different from caves, because they are dug out by the people who live in them; and perhaps they are not altogether underground, as the roof of the house is nearly always above the surface. But the sides of the house are below the ground, and the people who live in it do really live underground.

A house of this kind has many disadvantages. It is not easy to get in and out of it. The house cannot be well lighted or well aired, and must be very damp, unless the country is very dry. With all these inconveniences, we may be sure that such houses are only occupied for some very good reason. Their great recommendation is that they are sheltered and warm, and so it is in cold countries, like Kamtchatka, that they are usually found. Very often they are only inhabited during the winter, a lighter kind of house or hut being erected above the ground for use in summer.

The Kamtchatkan winter-house is a hole dug in ground to a depth of from three to six feet, and roofed with turf. The hut is round, and in the middle of its piled-up conical roof a hole is left. This hole is the chimney, the window, and the door of the house, though there is often another door at the side. A notched post, standing up through the opening in the roof, serves as a ladder by which the master and the boys go in and out of the house. The women enter by the side passage, which, in some huts, is made winding, so as to keep out the snow blown against the side door by the wind. In this poor little hut a family lies huddled together during the long winter.

Underground houses, somewhat similar to these, are to be found in almost all the countries on the shores of the Arctic Sea. In the Aleutian Islands, not far from Kamtchatka, the natives build their huts partly underground, so that the small windows are on a level with the surface. The buildings are long rather than round, and, in places where wood is cast up by the sea, their roofs are made of turf supported by wooden rafters. The entrance is through the roof. Where there is a plentiful supply of wood for making fires, there is a large opening in the roof for the smoke to escape, and when not in use this hole is closed with a skylight of blubber.

In some Arctic houses there is a sort of outer pit connected by an underground passage with the inhabited house. A ladder leads down to the pit, where the people of the house take off their snowy clothing, put down their weapons, and leave the dogs, and afterwards crawl on their hands and knees through the passage to the inner room. The pit is shielded by a cover to keep out the snow and wind.

Some of the Maories who live in the more exposed situations of New Zealand make themselves winter huts which are half buried in the ground. They close these up so thoroughly that, even when the weather is keenly cold and frosty, the huts are as

hot within as our houses are in summer. But they are ill-ventilated, and there is no escape for the tobacco smoke, which the Maori, who is fond of smoking, makes. The huts are very unhealthy, and the Maoris who live in them suffer a good deal from disease.

A traveller in Armenia describes some underground houses which he saw in the country near Lake Van. They were mere holes in the hillside, in which human beings and cattle dwelt together. The men descended by a ladder, but there was a separate entrance for the cattle. The houses were made at a distance from the road, where they could not easily be seen, in order that they might not be visited by the plundering soldiers and tax-collectors of that ill-governed country. 'It is not uncommon,' says the writer, 'for a traveller to receive the first intimation of his approach to a village by finding his horse's fore feet down a chimney, and himself taking his place unexpectedly in the family circle through the roof.'

Underground dwellings are to be found in many other parts of the world. Some of the North American Indians used them in winter very much as the Kamtchatkans still do. Stanley found some tribes in Central Africa who live in houses under the ground, which are entered by small but deep round pits. A mere hole in the ground, covered by a slanting screen, is often all the protection which the savage Australian is able to make for himself. He has no better house.

Underground houses used to be much more commonly used than they are now. The remains of them are to be found in many countries which are now highly civilised. They may even be found in England, Scotland, and Ireland. Though in many cases it is hundreds of years since they were occupied, it is quite plain, from the shape of the remains, that they were once real dwellings, similar to those which are still used by the savages of many distant countries. W. A. Atkinson.

THE LAMENT OF THE LEAVES.

'OH, hush!' sighed the little gold leaves, 'for the summer is done,
And soon, ah! too soon, we must leave our dear mother, the tree;
And soon will be ended our dance in the light of the sun,
For, watching, we see how it wanes over woodland and lea.

'How fair was that morn when we heard the awakening voice!
How gladly we sprang from the sheath to bid welcome the flowers!
With them and the birds and the bees we made haste to rejoice;
Now summer has gone, with its treasure of long, joyful hours.

'And lo! we are whirling adrift in the rain and the blast;
Not gold are we now, but as brown as the hedge-sparrow's wings;
Sad hosts and forlorn, crooning songs of a glory that's past,
We go on our way to the sorrowful Land of Lost Things.'

HEROINES OF THE CIVIL WAR.

VII.—THE FLAG'S STORY.

ONE black January day two little girls were wandering aimlessly up and down the hall of a stately country house in the North of England. The snow was falling fast outside, drifting against the mullioned windows, and making it quite impossible to see out, much less go out.

'Oh, dear me, it is dull work spending our Christmas holidays with Grandfather, when Aunt Helen is away,' sighed Rosalind; 'he is always so busy with his books and his papers that he has no time to speak to us.'

'Yes, I know,' answered Winifred, sadly. 'When I poked my head into the library a little while ago, in the hope that he would see me, and propose a lesson in playing chess, he never lifted his head from his writing, and merely said, "Run away, Winifred; run away, that's a good child, and amuse yourself. I cannot be disturbed just now. Rosalind and you may do anything you like. If it is too stormy for you to go outside, you can go down into the hall and examine the armour. But be sure you do not break anything."'

'Break anything!' repeated Rosalind, scornfully, tossing back her dark hair with an impatient little gesture. 'Does he think we are babies? Besides, I think these old shields and swords would be very hard to break. All the same I wish some of it could speak,' she added, walking to the end of the hall, where a complete suit of armour stood, and looking wistfully up at the barred helmet. 'It would be fun to know who fought inside this, or who carried those two old flags which are hanging up there. Poor old things, aren't they tattered and torn?'

'Would you really like to know who carried us, and how we came to be here?' said a voice, at which both the girls started. For it came right from the middle of the flags. In fact there was no doubt that it was one of the flags who spoke.

Rosalind and Winifred sank down breathlessly on the floor, and looked up in awe-struck silence. They had always wished for something wonderful to happen, and now something wonderful had happened in right earnest.

'I and my companion began life,' said the flag, 'as the colours of a regiment of soldiers, which belonged to good Queen Bess, nigh three hundred years ago. She died, and her cousin's son, James Stuart, came from Scotland to succeed her; then he died, and his son Charles reigned in his stead. Still our regiment lived on, and still we were carried at head of it.

'Then came the great Civil War, when terrible things happened. The people of England were divided into two parties. Our regiment fought for Cromwell, and so it came about that we flags found ourselves, one April day, along with a number of others,

"They had captured our gun."

waving over the heads of a great company of soldiers, who were encamped in the midst of a green Lancashire meadow. There was no opposing army in front of us, for we had not come to fight a pitched battle; and in good truth I wished we had, for we were doing less noble work than that. We were surrounding and besieging a great Manor House, known as Lathom House, which belonged to the Earl of Derby, and

which was the only spot in all the county that held out for King Charles.

'And that house was defended by a woman, the Countess of Derby, who had with her nine little children, and but a small garrison of soldiers. Her husband was with the King, and she had no man who was her equal in rank to advise her, and yet she refused to surrender. I know that, for I was planted in front of General Fairfax's tent (he was in command), so that I had only to keep my ears open, and I learned much.

'I saw a soldier sent away with a message to the Countess, calling on her to throw open her gates, and I saw the same soldier return with her defiant answer that she would rather burn the house down, and perish in the flames along with her children, than be guilty of such treachery. The General's face darkened when he heard the brave words. "Her blood, and her children's blood, be on her own head," he said, "for I must do my duty. The house will be ours within a couple of days, and I cannot promise that no injury will be done to the inmates in the taking of it."

'My heart was sore at his words, as I thought of the brave woman and her little children exposed to the frightful risks of war. But a couple of days passed, and another couple, and another, yet Lathom House held its own, and we had seen two sorties made, and twice our men had been driven back with heavy loss. I had seen, also, something that General Fairfax and his officers had not seen, for, when the sorties were made, I had seen two men, who came from the besieged house along with the others, but who did not fight. In the confusion they slipped unnoticed through our lines, and vanished in the darkness, and I knew they had gone to summon help — to Prince Rupert, or mayhap to the King, with whom was the brave Countess's husband; and although I waved over the Parliamentary army, and was supposed to be a Parliamentary flag, I hoped that they might reach their destination in safety, and that succour would come in time.

'It seemed to be hoping against hope, however, for the odds were all on our side, and when, one day, a great cannon was brought from Bolton, and placed on a piece of rising ground, and shot after shot was fired from it against the strong walls of the besieged house, our victory seemed sure. And it would have been sure, for already the walls were beginning to crack, had not night fallen, and we were forced to wait till another day.

'But ere another day dawned, a wonderful thing happened. That handful of men, cheered on by the words of courage which the Countess spoke to them, opened their gates and rushed out, and ere our drowsy soldiers realised what was happening, they had killed our gunners and captured our gun.

'Then they shut the gates in our faces again, and left us with our power gone, and fuming with anger. And when our power was gone our courage began to go too. It was one thing to besiege a house in which were men armed only with matchlocks; it was another to besiege a house in which there was a cannon.

'So we lost heart, at least the soldiers did—what we flags thought had better not be told—and when, at last, one glorious May morning, a rumour spread abroad that Prince Rupert and his men were coming up behind us, from Newark, their courage vanished altogether, and we flags were lifted and carried in undignified haste to Bolton.

'Prince Rupert was on their track, however, and he was like a bloodhound, ever swift and keen, and he came upon them at Bolton, and fought with them and scattered their army, and took its flags. Do you know what he did with us?

'He gathered us all together, and he rode over at the head of his men to Lathom House, and encamped just where General Fairfax's army had been encamped. And when the brave Countess opened her gates, and came out to greet him, with her children round her, he presented us to her on bended knee, as a tribute to her bravery, while all the trumpets sounded, and the soldiers threw their caps in the air, and cheered and cheered again.

'This is how it was that my companion and I came into your brave ancestor's keeping, and we always remained in her possession, and in the possession of her descendants, for, as I said, we had waved over General Fairfax's tent; so we were the principal flags, as it were, amongst all the others, and she desired that we should remain in her family as heirlooms.'

'Our ancestress,' said Winifred eagerly; 'then it must have been our great-great-great-grandmother, Charlotte, Countess of Derby, whose portrait is in the library at home, whom you have been talking about.'

'I am called after her,' chimed in Rosalind, 'for my name is Rosalind Charlotte,' and she looked up at the old flag as she spoke, feeling as if she had some special claim on its friendship, because of the name she bore. But the old flag had told its story, and it made no further sign.

NOBODY'S DOG.

(*Continued from page* 286.)

CHAPTER XIII.

LUKE was as glad to have me in his arms as I was to nestle there, though a man does not show his gladness in the same way that a dog does. He soon put me down, and I followed him as if in a joyful dream. We had not gone far homewards, however, before a few notes from the flute of Piping Peter caused Luke to turn round and give a hearty greeting to the wanderer.

'What, you back again, Pat! What has brought you home so soon?'

'A matter of five pounds, and no less,' said Pat, pointing to me.

The two men then engaged in an earnest conversation, the upshot of which was that, in spite of my complaints at leaving Luke again so soon, I was ordered back with Pat.

'I'll bring him back safe and sound to-morrow,' said the piper, 'as soon as we have been up to Crofton Court together.'

'All right,' said Luke; 'it will be best all round too, as we are sleeping for the first time to-night at our new house.'

Daddy Pinch joined us. 'Well, that's a queer

thing,' he said, after the two old men had walked a few steps side by side.

'I believe you,' said the other, stopping short.

'And now, if you'll take a turn round the churchyard with me before we go home, I'll show you a queerer. Are you game for it?'

'Of course I am,' said Pat. 'Am I a child to be scared at the idea of a ghost?'

'Come on, then. It is only a few steps, if you take this short cut by the back of the Club, through the long grass. Here we are among the graves at once. Perhaps you had better pick up the little dog—he will be getting the string round some of the stones. There, hold him under your left arm. Take this narrow path to the left. Look—look there! Talk of ghosts, what do you say to that?'

Under the black shadow cast by the church something white was slowly moving. It might be a figure on all fours. Quite silently it passed in and out among the green mounds and large flat slabs, gleaming like a patch of snow where the moonlight fell full on it, then, half hidden by the shadow of some tree or tall headstone, till at last it settled on a long green mound, turned restlessly about a couple or three times, and finally stretched itself out at full length with a deep, half-human sigh. It struck with an unearthly sound on the ear of the old man who carried me, and I felt him start, though he said nothing.

'Come nearer,' whispered Daddy Pinch, who took things quite as a matter of course. 'Don't make more noise to disturb it than you can help.'

'What is it?' said Pat, breathlessly, as they drew nearer to the white form on the ground.

'That is the most wonderful monument in this churchyard,' said old Daddy Pinch, pointing to what now showed itself clearly as the form of a dog lying easily, as if asleep. 'That is one of the most marvellous sights the sun looks down upon, or the moon either—a dog dying for the love of its master. This,' he repeated, lifting up his withered hand towards the sky, 'is the creature God made—"faithful until death."'

'Is it Goldie, the spaniel, whose master was killed in the road in the spring?' said Pat. 'I happened to read the account in the paper of an accident. Something was said about the dog—that he would not leave the body, and seemed in a fury, and had, since the burial, haunted the grave.'

'And why?' said Daddy Pinch, sinking his voice to a whisper, with a look around as if afraid of listeners. 'Why? The grief of a dog is a common story—they are willing to die for us every day. But the dog's rage—can you account for that?'

'No, unless he was fierce.'

'Old Goldie fierce! Why, he will let the little children, too young to know better, put their sweets into his mouth and take them out again. He was gentle to a fault—poor-spirited, some called him—and no good as a sporting dog. But his master, who was a trifle in that line himself, a humble soul, loved him dearly. Goldie's rage was because there was foul play, and he knew it. The creature could have told how his master died if only he had had a human tongue. I liked his master; he was a good man to the poor, and when I was a stranger here he trusted me, and spoke to Sir William for me, to let me rent the bit of a cottage I wanted so badly, which he was loath to do.'

'Let me see, what was the verdict at the inquest?' said Piping Pat.

'Manslaughter, against some person unknown. You see, the doctors made out that prompt help would have saved Mr. Marjory's life, if the selfish villain who rode him down had stopped to give it. Now, Pat, I tell you that person is not unknown; not a bit of it. He is not unknown to the dog. See here.'

Daddy Pinch pulled out of his pocket a second time the man's fur glove which he had shown to Rupert Eversley, and stepped very carefully to the grave, so as not to startle the dog.

In an instant Goldie was on his feet, barking furiously, as a spaniel gives cry on finding game. Darting in an excited manner from the grave, he circled round it, nose to the ground; then, finding that no scent lay by which he could track the owner of the glove, threw back his head, and, with a prolonged howl of despair, lay down again to keep that endless, hopeless watch over the sleeper who never woke.

Pat looked on in mute astonishment, but I could not help joining in Goldie's cry of pain and woe, which I understood better than any man could do. At a little distance another dog in trouble of some kind took up the lamentable sound like an echo.

'We shall set every dog in the village barking next,' said Daddy Pinch; 'we had best go home. I will tell you the rest there, if you can't put two and two together for yourself. Do you understand *now* why I get my 'baccy for nothing?'

Pat only shook his head in reply.

(*Continued on page* 298.)

'PUNCTURED!'

LILY was recovering from a serious illness, and longed for blackberries, so, on his first half-holiday, Fred started off on a long ride in search of some.

Bump! bump! bump! went the back wheel.

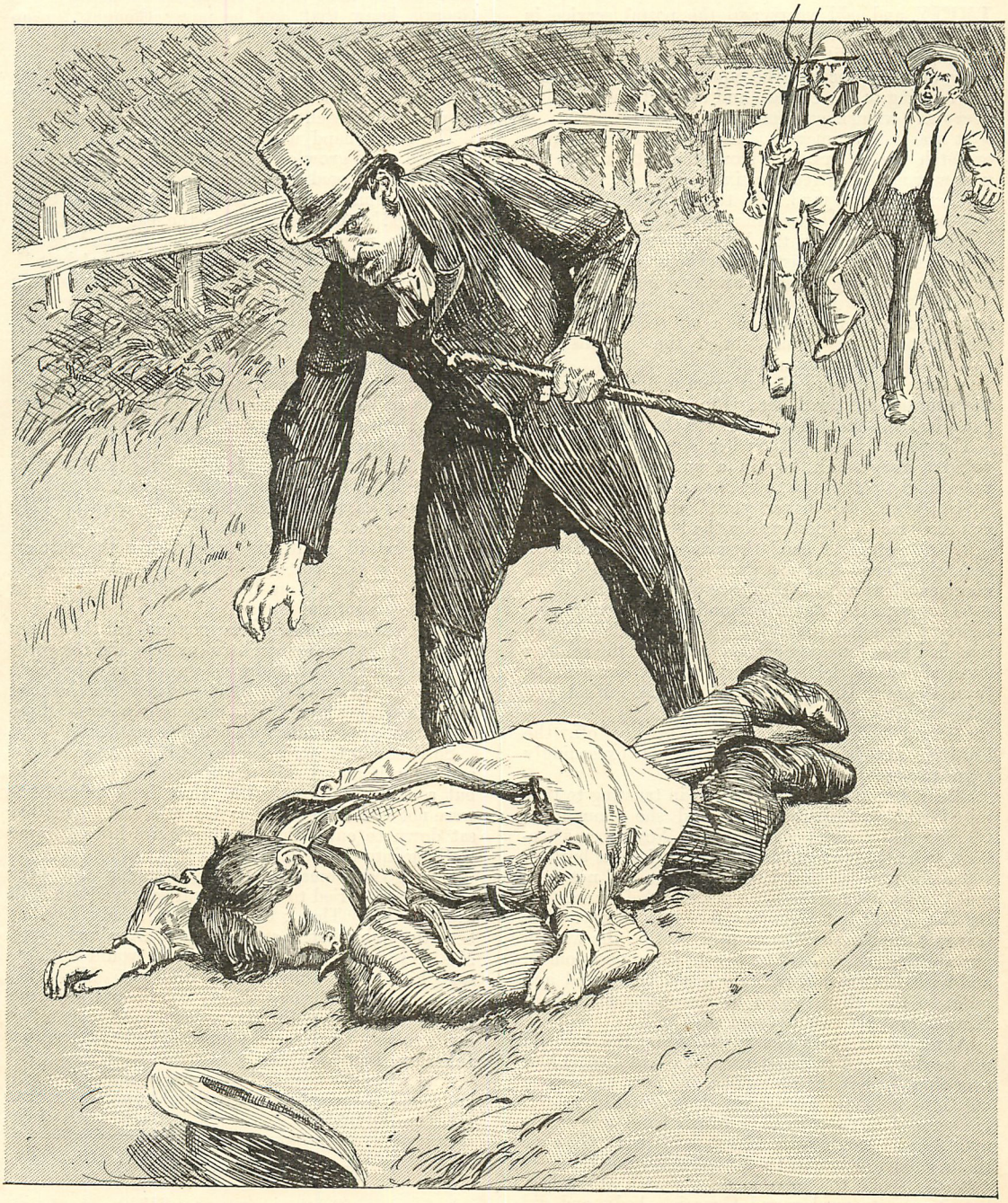
'A puncture!' cried the boy, 'and only as far as the turning to Penshurst Woods! I shall never get to Derham to-day.'

''Tis a misfortune, sure enough, but don't let it puncture your happiness, young master!' cried a cheery game-keeper, leaning over a stile.

Good advice, which Fred had the sense to value. Sour looks and ill-temper can easily puncture happiness, while patient good-humour runs smoothly and pleasantly, like a sound pneumatic tyre. Fred sensibly made up his mind not to be put out, and succeeded so well that when the tyre was mended the man led him to a sunny, sheltered corner, where more fine blackberries had ripened than the boy had ever hoped to find.

'Lily will be pleased!' said Fred joyfully, as he turned homewards. 'I will try always to take things without grumbling, and remember that pleasantness makes the wheels of life run smoothly; but harsh words and ill-temper are like punctured tyres.'

"'Don't let it puncture your happiness, young master.'"



"A couple of sturdy farm-hands came hurrying up."

POSTMAN GEORGIE.

FIFTY and odd years ago the postal service in remote country districts was very primitive indeed, but the little village of Foxholes secured a daily delivery because the Squire of Foxholes had a son fighting in the Crimea, and insisted upon getting every day what news there was.

It was not a smart postman who came to bring or fetch the letters to or from that little village; a widow-woman trudged the six long miles in sun and dust, or rain and mud, into the town, the leathern post-bag upon her bowed shoulders.

But one day, when the letters were sorted at the post-office at Stoneminster, the widow was not there as usual, standing patiently awaiting her budget.

'Here's three newspapers, and two—three—five letters for Foxholes, and one a big sealed one from foreign parts for Squire,' cried the postmistress. 'Where's Widow Wiseman?'

A very small voice almost from under the level of the counter answered her: 'Please, mum, Mother's got a bad leg, and I have come for the letters.'

The postmistress put on her spectacles and surveyed a very small boy in a smock-frock, whose years might perhaps have been twelve.

'Georgie! It's never you!' she said. 'Why, you can't read to know whom the letters are for.'

'Please mum, I can,' Georgie assured her with such confidence that she gave him the bundle, with many cautions as to taking care of the letters.

'That with the blue line round it will have money in it. You mind that, and don't lose it.' (A man who had been lounging carelessly against the counter came closer as she spoke.) 'This big one will be from Captain Harry, away in Russia. Mind you take those two safe to the Squire.'

Georgie nodded and walked briskly off, the leathern post-bag half covering his exceedingly small person.

'Dear, I wonder if I did right in trusting to that mite!' the postmistress said, and she thought of Georgie many times on that wet November afternoon as he trudged steadily onward with his burden.

The distance seemed long, for there had not been much breakfast for the little postman before starting for the town; but Georgie's face was cheery. For this was the day the Squire paid Mother the weekly two shillings she earned by her duties as postwoman, and with that money Georgie could buy bread and milk, so that there would be some supper for poor Mother, and his own wet and tired self.

Absorbed in these cheery thoughts, the boy did not heed a sound of footsteps which had dogged him ever since he left the post-office, and now, as he came out into a lonely cart-track, drew rapidly nearer. He noticed nothing until a rough hand was on his mouth and a harsh voice hissed in his ear, 'Give me the bag, boy, or it will be the worse for you!'

As he spoke the man made a snatch at the bag, but it was strapped round Georgie's body, and did not come away. Suddenly Georgie, collecting his wits, dived under the fellow's arm, and fled as fast as he could in the crazy old boots which were so much too big for him. The man gave chase, uttering horrible threats; but Georgie, though his heart went pit-a-pat with terror, ran on boldly. A postman *had* to bring his letters safely to their owners. Georgie knew that, and he never thought for an instant of giving up his bag.

The man was almost up with him now, and Georgie gasped. Only a few yards in front were the farm-buildings belonging to Farmer Duncan. If only he could reach them, the letters would be safe!

The man's hand was on his collar now. 'Here, give 'em up!' growled the harsh voice,

Georgie dragged the bag round, clasping it with both his arms. 'I won't!' he said. 'I *must* bring them safe!' And, clinging to the bag with all his might, he raised his boyish voice as loud as his strength would allow and shouted, 'Help! help!'

He saw the man raise his stick, felt a dull thud on his head, followed by a sickening pain, and fell forward over the post-bag he had guarded so stoutly, just as a couple of sturdy farm-hands came hurrying up round the bend in the track.

When Georgie came to his senses he was lying on a settle in the farmhouse kitchen, with a bandage round his head and a queer, shaky feeling all over him. He tried to sit up.

'Lie still, my dear, and drink this,' said a kind voice, and the farmer's wife held milk to his lips.

Memory came back to Georgie in a rush. 'My bag!' he cried. 'My letters!'

'They're all right, youngster,' said the farmer, holding up the post-bag, which was stained with something red. 'You have saved your bag; yon rascal never got the letters.'

But Georgie would not be content till the letters were delivered to their rightful owners, and the good-natured farmer, seeing him set upon it, put the horse to his gig, and drove the little postman and his bag to Foxholes, his kindly wife putting in a splendid pie and a can of new milk for Georgie's mother.

So Postman Georgie delivered his letters in safety, and went home to his mother with a broken head but a thankful heart. But that day's adventures were not ended yet, for as Georgie and his mother sat down to enjoy the pie, the Squire himself came walking into the little cottage.

'My good woman,' he said, stopping the poor widow as she tried to rise and curtsy, 'we have both cause to say "Thank God" to-night. My boy has been through a battle and come out alive, and yours, Mrs. Wiseman, is a little hero, who would not forsake his trust. Duncan has told me. We must make a soldier of you—eh, my boy?—and send you to fight under Captain Harry; and in the meantime here's something to mend your head and to remember Inkerman Day by.'

And when the Squire had gone, as suddenly as he had come, Georgie found five bright gold sovereigns lying on the table.

NOBODY'S DOG.

(*Continued from page* 295.)

THE men hardly talked at all on our way back; only a few words were spoken.

'You don't see your way yet?' said Daddy. 'Why, it's as clear as daylight. On the same day

which was Goldie's master's last, I happened to be clearing out a ditch beside the road and saw Mr. Marjory go by on his bicycle, with the spaniel. He was hardly riding faster than he could walk, and was talking to the dog. Hearing the sound of my bill-hook, he called out "Good-day!" I was pretty well hidden behind the hedge, and Bristles, there, was lying on my coat, telling me it was nearing the dinner-hour, and that dogs did not forget the time if men did. I had hardly pulled out my bread and cheese, when I heard that sharp, puffing sound that the new-fangled motor-bikes make, ever so far off. I looked through the hedge, but could see nothing except Mr. Marjory and the dog on ahead, just where the steep lane to Ferrybridge crosses the high-road. Suddenly I noticed a great cloud of dust and heard a shout. There seemed to be a smash of some kind; the loud howling and shrieking of an angry dog fell upon my ears. When the dust cleared a little, a dark-looking mass lay where the roads crossed, and the next minute young Rupert Eversley rushed by me riding his puffing thing from the spot at a mad speed, pale as death, and looking as if he had taken leave of his senses. He turned down the way to Ferrybridge station as hard as he could pelt and thought that nobody saw him.

'Twenty years ago I should have leapt the hedge and have run to the cross-roads, but I am an old man now, and before I could get to the place, others were there. I could scarce see what lay on the road, but I spied this glove and picked it up and kept it. It was the glove of Rupert Eversley, Mr. Marjory's murderer—for it was little better than murder to knock the man down and leave him there to die. Rupert Eversley knows I have the glove and that it would be an ugly witness against him; that is why he keeps me in 'baccy for nothing. Did you think it was for charity or kindness? That young fellow never gives away the value of a halfpenny; he has no pity for the poor, and mocks at the pain of animals, and, mark my words, the youngster who makes light of suffering creatures will make light of human sufferings by-and-by.'

'True,' said Piping Pat. 'I have no son of my own, but if I had I should take care, for my own sake, to train him early to be merciful. Mercy, whether shown towards a dumb animal or towards one's fellow-man, springs from one root, and it is in early childhood that the good seed must be sown. But, why do not others speak out in the matter of Mr. Marjory?'

'Partly for his parents' sake, partly for their own sakes, lest he should do them some sly mischief. His very servants hate him, and his groom, dismissed for knowing too many of his master's secrets, was the very chap to bring me the fellow to this glove, which his master had hidden, buried, as he thought, safely under a bush in the garden, for fear it should tell tales. This he did as soon as he found that he had dropped the other near the scene of the accident. A guilty conscience, you see.'

By this time we were close to the cottage, and Daddy let us in with his key. Bristles, who knew his friends by their step, took no more notice of our entrance than to raise his eyelids and glance at us from under a wrinkled brow. A comfortable meal was set before us all, including Bristles and myself, not forgetting Jenny in the shed. The two old men then went upstairs to bed; Bristles and I settled on the rug, and peace fell on the little Beehive Cottage and its tired inmates.

(*Continued on page* 307.)

A PRINCESS'S HYMN.

THE following hymn was written by Elizabeth Stuart, the eldest daughter of James I., who in later years was called the 'Queen of Hearts.' At the time that she made these verses, she was only thirteen years of age.

This is a joy—this is true pleasure,
If we best things make our treasure,
And enjoy them at full leisure,
Evermore in richest measure.

God is only excellent,
Let up to Him our love be sent;
Whose desires are set and bent
On ought else, shall much repent.

Theirs is a most wretched case
Who themselves so far disgrace,
That they their affections place
Upon things named vile and base.

Earthly things do fade, decay,
Contentations of one day;
Suddenly they pass away,
And man cannot make them stay.

All the vast world doth contain
To content men's hearts is vain,
That still justly will complain,
And unsatisfied remain.

Why should vain joys us transport?
Earthly pleasures are but short,
And are mingled in such sort,
Griefs are greater than the sport.

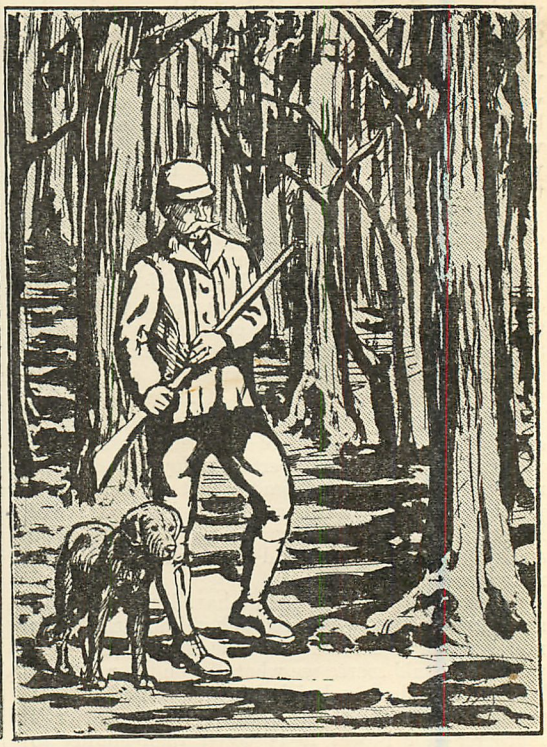
God, most holy, high, and great,
Our delight doth make complete;
When in us He takes His seat,
Only then we are replete.

Oh, my soul, of heavenly birth,
Do thou scorn this basest earth;
Place not here thy joy and mirth,
Where of bliss is greatest dearth.

From below thy hand remove,
And effect the things above;
Set thy heart and fix thy love
Where thy truest joys shall prove.

To me grace, O Father, send,
On Thee wholly to depend,
That all may to Thy glory tend;
So let me live; so let me end.

Find the Hunter.



Find the Partridge.

Find the Fish.

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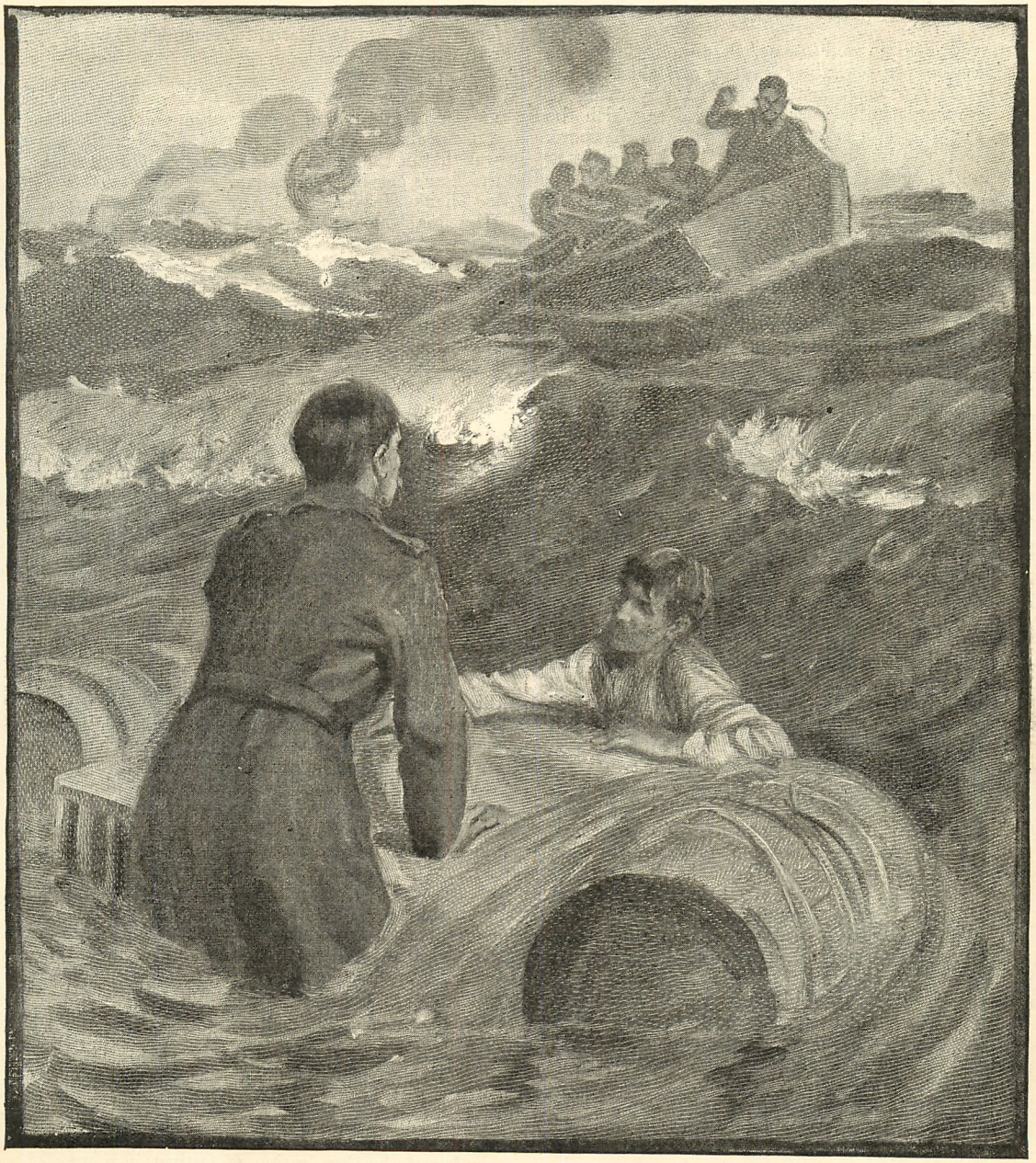


"'You might as well tow us!' Paul shouted."

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 291.)

THE junk's deck was littered with empty cases and hencoops, the contents of which had been discharged at Port Arthur.

'Take that coop,' Paul suggested, 'and tie a barrel or two to it—there are plenty about!'

The brothers quickly lashed a kind of raft together, finishing their work just in time, for a minute or so after they had completed the job, the junk sank and they found themselves sucked down for a moment beneath the waves; both clung desperately, however, to their hencoop, which presently bobbed up to the surface, carrying them panting and gasping with it. The Chinamen in their

over-crowded boat were floating safely a few yards away.

'You might as well tow us,' Paul shouted; but the Chinese skipper, regarding Paul as the chief author of his misfortunes, merely sent back a string of abusive words in his own language, after which the boat made its way as rapidly as possible for the shore.

'The last battleship may see and pick us up,' said the Eagle; 'she is coming our way, see!'

Both lads watched the *Petropavlofsk* approach, half hoping, as they floated upon their clumsy raft, that she would lower a boat and pick them up. Suddenly, however, even as they watched, they were startled to hear a dull explosion, followed by a second, terrifically loud and startling.

'Look!' exclaimed the Eagle, 'look at her, Paul, the battleship—she is struck—is it a torpedo, or what? She will sink—watch her listing over.'

This was the ill-fated *Petropavlofsk*, Admiral Makarof's flagship, which, though the twins knew it not at the time, had come into collision with a sunken mine; she was now within a quarter of a mile of our heroes and rapidly approaching them, but as she came gliding slowly through the water, she was sinking, her impetus still carrying her forward.

They watched the splendid vessel in her death-agony; saw her list and list still more, her stern settling deeper every instant; they saw the Admiral and others upon the bridge and watched the terrified crew running this way and that over the decks; they could even hear the shouts and cries of the panic-stricken sailors—it was a piteous spectacle and one never to be forgotten.

'God help them all—what a fearful thing, Eagle!' murmured Paul. 'See, scores of them are killed already by the explosion, and many are sure to be drowned—possibly we may pick up one or two.'

Five minutes later there was not a whole fragment of the wretched *Petropavlofsk* floating above the surface of the water; spars and wreckage strewed the waves—a few men were swimming hither and thither, trying to lay hold of something to support them; the rest, together with Makarof, Russia's best sailor, had gone down.

The Eagle suddenly cried, 'Here is a man swimming, Paul. He's in difficulties—I'm going in to help him.'

'Both of us, then,' said Paul, and in an instant both youths were swimming towards a young officer who struggled, and sank, and swam again.

'Hold up a minute,' shouted Paul, 'and we shall reach you.'

The Eagle, being a splendid swimmer, reached the drowning man first. With Paul to help he was soon assisted back to the hencoop, and all three contrived to climb upon it.

'Ah!' gasped the new arrival, 'what a terrible thing. Where is she—the *Petropavlofsk*—gone right under?' He looked wildly about, scared, horrified, trembling in every limb. 'I was with Makarof,' he added; 'something knocked me off the bridge—we must find Makarof.'

Paul gazed at the youth; he seemed to know his face, but was unable to remember his name; an imperious-looking young man, good-looking and aristocratic. The new-comer caught his eye.

'Who are you?' he suddenly asked. 'I know your face, but I am too dazed to remember things—you will pardon me——'

'I am Stirinof.'

'Of course—Count Stirinof. You do not recognise me, I see. I am Dmitri Maximilianovitch.'

Immediately Paul saluted respectfully; the name was that of the son of one of Russia's Grand Dukes, the Tsar's cousin, Maximilian.

'Thank Heaven we have saved your Imperial Highness!' he said. 'I had no idea you were on board——'

'As spectator—oh, it is cold—can we do nothing for Makarof and the others? It is terrible! See, the Japanese ships have turned—that, at least, is good!'

(*Continued on page* 306.)

HEROES OF DUTY.

VII.—JOHN CRANMER CAMBRIDGE.

IN the early days of August, 1901, John Cranmer Cambridge, a young clerk in the offices of the London County Council, set out with his two sisters and a brother on a well-earned holiday. On the 8th of the month they were at Ostend. The day was fine and sunny, and many people were taking advantage of the beautiful weather to bathe in the sea. Suddenly a cry was raised that a party of swimmers, some distance from the shore, were in distress, unable to battle against the strong current into which they had been carried. Scarcely had this terrible fact been noticed when John Cambridge's brother and sisters missed him, and the next moment saw him striking out to sea with all the strength and speed he could command.

With breathless anxiety, they watched him till he reached one of those in distress—a young girl. A boat was now put out from shore, but a terrible time elapsed before it could effect a rescue. John Cambridge, however, succeeded in the task he had set himself; but, though the girl to whom he had given aid was lifted into the boat, he himself sank before its arrival, overcome by exhaustion. We can imagine the anguish of brother and sisters, who, from the shore, watched this sad event, and can surely realise the distress they felt when the boatman refused to go out again with the hope of saving him. When at last another boat was obtained, the young hero was beyond all need of earthly aid.

A few days later, with all the honour due to one who had so acquitted himself, he was buried in Belgian soil, the flag of England wrapping his coffin round. Among the attendants at the funeral was a member of the Corporation of Ostend, in witness of the respect that the townspeople felt for the citizen of another land who could thus give his life to save that of one of their countrywomen.

A year later a tablet of brass, subscribed for by his colleagues, was erected to his memory in a corridor of the London County Council's offices, and no one can pass it without a feeling of admiration for the deed that it records, and regret for the promising young life thus suddenly brought to a close.

HAROLD'S REPENTANCE.

Founded on Fact.

HAROLD FREEMAN hurried through the school doors, and, as a gust of bitter wind met him, pulled up the collar of his warm coat. Long before his lessons were over he had felt the pangs of hunger, and would thankfully have eaten the comfortable meal which he had so crossly refused in the morning. Remembering a short cut by which his father had once taken him, he turned into a narrow street and ran until a gentle touch upon his arm made him stop and look round.

'Please, I can't find the soup kitchen.'

Standing by his side was a little girl of about his own age, clasping what looked like a bundle in her thin arms.

'I have lost my way, and Baby's so heavy. Will you carry her for me?' she added, wistfully.

'Certainly,' said Harold. He was a warm-hearted boy, and the sight of the little girl's distress touched him at once.

'Better hurry up, Dollie,' shouted a small boy, as he ran past them. 'I was late last day, and didn't have any dinner because they ran short.'

'Oh, don't let us be too late,' said the little girl, with a sob, and she hurriedly tucked the ragged bundle which she had been carrying into Harold's arms.

In and out among the narrow streets they ran, always with an eye upon the small figure of the boy with the tattered sailor suit, who scurried along in front of them. Harold was panting with the exertion of carrying the baby when, turning into the dirtiest of all the streets through which they had come, he found himself at the tail end of a crowd of ragged children who were streaming into what appeared to be a small school-house. Most of them were hatless, many shoeless, and a few walked with difficulty in boots which evidently belonged to a father or mother.

'A farthing dinner, please,' called the little girl, when in their turn they reached the school-house, and she pushed her farthing across the sill of a small window behind which some one was standing.

'A halfpenny dinner,' whispered Harold, and so low was his voice that the lady had to lean forward to hear him. As she gave him the small ticket which was handed to every one, the boy did not see the look of surprise that came into her face.

After much pushing and jostling, he found himself in a long room filled with rows of benches and forms.

'Two more here,' called a woman, and the children squeezed themselves into the last vacant seats in the room.

Dollie gave a sigh of content, and taking baby from Harold, whose arms were stiff and tired, she unpinned the shawl at its throat, and propped it up in a sitting position upon her knee.

'Baby's turn to get dinner to-day,' she murmured; 'nice, nice hot soup. Is your father out of work too?' she added abruptly, turning to Harold, who was gazing awestruck round the room, for this picture of cold and hungry children had given him a queer lump in his throat.

'No—o,' he said, thoughtfully, 'I don't think so. Is yours?'

Dollie nodded her head. 'And Mother's ill,' she added, with a quiver in her voice; 'so only Baby can have dinner to-day.'

'Then will you have yours with your father and mother?'

A boy sitting next to him gave a scornful grunt. 'Stupid,' he muttered, 'you can't have dinner when your father's out of work.'

'Then is your father what my nurse calls a poor man?' asked Harold with growing interest.

Dollie nodded. She was too busy feeding the baby with spoonfuls of hot soup to speak.

'Don't you like pea-soup?' she said at last, looking wistfully at Harold's plateful which was untouched.

The boy shook his head. 'I wish you would finish it for me,' he said softly, pushing it in front of her.

'Perhaps your father hasn't been out of work long,' mumbled the starving child, as she devoured it greedily. 'Wait till you have nothing but crusts for a day or two, and then you will eat it.'

Nothing but crusts! With a pang of shame Harold recalled the trouble that he constantly gave to his mother and nurse about his food. He was wondering whether it would be possible for him to run home and get some nice food for this unselfish little girl, who had so bravely denied herself any dinner for the sake of the baby, when some one called:—

'Will those children who have finished, please rise quickly.'

'Mother!' he gasped; his eyes looking round with surprise.

'Yes, dear, I come here once a week to help. But what brought you, my son?'

'Dollie did. You see, the baby is so heavy, and—and—oh, please, can she have my dinner, Mummie? Her father is out of work, and she doesn't have anything to eat but crusts!'

'Poor little Dollie,' murmured his mother. 'Come here,' she said, signing to the child who was slowly leaving the bright, warm schoolroom, the baby clasped in her arms. 'Suppose you take baby home to Mother, and bring a nice large basket to my house for some more dinner!'

Dollie's thin face beamed with delight. 'And please can I give it to Mother, for she is ill?' she whispered.

'I think there will be enough for you and Father, and Baby also,' answered Harold's mother. 'You dear, unselfish little thing,' she added to herself, as the child hurried away to tell her sick mother the good news.

And then as Harold walked home with his mother, she told him how bravely Dollie's father had fought against sickness and want, not begging from or telling any one, although they often had almost no food. 'But,' she added, 'I hope the father has succeeded in getting work, so they will be able, once again, to have proper meals and warm clothes.'

'And, Mother, I will never be cross about *my* breakfast again,' murmured the repentant boy.

B. CRICHTON.

"'A farthing dinner, please.'"

"He read the address before giving it up."

WHAT THE POSTMAN BROUGHT.

'I AM very sorry, Nellie, but there is no help for it: the master says you must go. If you would only own up, we would forgive you, but——'

With a burst of tears Nellie Burton interrupted her mistress. 'I have nothing to confess, ma'am,' said she. 'I didn't steal the ring—oh, if you would *only* believe my word!'

'But, Nellie,' continued Mrs. Fortescue, 'how can you account for the ring being found in your box?'

'I didn't put it there, ma'am,' sobbed the girl. 'Somebody else must have done so, and—I didn't know I had an enemy in the world.'

'It is no use prolonging this interview, Nellie.' Mrs. Fortescue's voice broke a little, for it had grieved her to the heart to discover that her young nurse was (as she had reason to believe) a thief.

'There is one thing I promise you,' added the lady, 'the little ones shall not know why you are leaving, if I can help it. They have thought so much of you, and so have I.'

For a few seconds after this, both mistress and maid were too overcome to speak. Then, with but few words on either side, they parted, and Nellie, with an undeserved stain upon her character, left the situation which for the past two years she had faithfully and conscientiously tried to fill.

Mrs. Burton, Nellie's widowed mother, was nearly as heart-broken as her daughter, upon hearing the story of her dismissal, but being a brave soul she did her best to cheer the unhappy girl.

'The wrong will be set right, Nellie,' said she, 'I feel sure of that—mark my words, the clouds will all roll away in time.'

But Nellie refused to be comforted.

Little Freda, the five-year-old darling of the household, was the only one who could bring sunshine to Aunt Nellie's pretty face. Freda was Mrs. Burton's orphan grandchild, who ever since her parents' death had found a home with 'Grannie.'

'Whatever will Charlie say when he comes home from sea?' said Nellie one morning to her mother. 'Do you think he will believe I'm a thief?' (Charlie, it should be said, was Nellie's sailor brother.)

'Here is the postman coming down the street,' cried Freda, interrupting the conversation. 'I wonder if he has got anything for us.' Hereupon the little maid began to sing a snatch of one of her school songs, called 'The Postman's Knock.' It ran thus:—

'Will he bring sadness, or sunshine and gladness?
We have only to wait and to see.
Will he bring treasure, or joy without measure,
Or will he bring nothing to me?'

The postman's coming was always a matter of great interest to the inmates of Rose Cottage, as Mrs. Burton's little dwelling was named, and when old Job Hanbury reached the door, he found three faces to greet him.

'Have you got a letter from my boy this morning?' asked Mrs. Burton anxiously; 'it's getting time I heard.'

'Don't you be in a hurry, mum!' said old Job, with a twinkle in his eye. 'There is one for Miss Nellie here, I see.'

With this, he gave Nellie a letter, which she examined minutely before opening. It bore the post-mark of Crayford, which was the name of the town where her former mistress dwelt, and was moreover addressed in Mrs. Fortescue's hand-writing.

Then the old man took another letter from his bag (Job was never known to hurry), and slowly and carefully read the address before giving it up.

'Yes, it's all right,' said he: 'Mrs. Burton, Rose Cottage, Elmwood, and it looks to me wonderfully like your boy's writing.'

'Give it to us quick, postman,' said little Freda, 'please, 'cause we are in a hurry.'

Whereat Job with a smile handed the letter to the child, and presently passed on his way.

'Charlie's coming home, Nellie—that's good news!' exclaimed Mrs. Burton, after reading her boy's letter.

But Nellie, to her mother's surprise, made no reply. Her cheeks were flushed and her eyes shining, as she read, and read again, the letter which she held in her now trembling hand.

'What's the matter, Aunt Nellie?' asked little Freda wonderingly.

'Never mind now, darling,' was the answer; 'you run and play while Auntie talks to Grannie.'

The child obeyed, and then it was that Nellie passed the letter she had been reading, on to her mother.

Well might a look of gladness come into her face, for the letter contained the best of news, namely, that her character was cleared of all stain, and that her mistress and the children whom she loved so well were longing to have her back.

The mystery of the stolen ring was accounted for in the simplest way possible. Little Eva, Mrs. Fortescue's three-year-old daughter, who was devoted to Nellie, had one day found a ring on the floor, and thinking she would like to 'surprise Nursie,' she had slipped it into a box on Nellie's dressing-table. Unfortunately, a crowd of other things coming to her childish mind, she had forgotten the incident, until a chance word from one of the servants revealed the cause of Nellie's dismissal.

And so, as Mrs. Burton prophesied, the wrong was set right, and the dark clouds were rolled away. Little Freda, when a few minutes later she came skipping back into the room, asked, 'What was it, Auntie dear, that the postman brought you?'

And Nellie made answer through a mist of happy tears. 'He brought me, little one,' said she, 'something that you were singing about a few minutes ago—"sunshine and gladness," and "joy without measure."'

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 302.)

CHAPTER XXXIV.

FOR some time the twins floated about in the double hope of rescue for themselves, and of being of service to some other poor floating waif whom they might save in the same manner as they had saved the Grand Duke from a watery grave; but though many dead bodies floated close by the

raft to which the three young men clung, not a living thing was to be seen moving upon the face of the waters.

Paul conversed with the Grand Duke, who, though he spoke little of the service rendered him, was not ungrateful.

'I remember you well, now,' he said. 'You fell into trouble at the Page Corps. You insulted the Director. Was that it?'

'I walked in a procession of students, and was arrested,' said Paul, flushing a little. 'The Director degraded me, and I suppose I was rather rude. He got me sent to Siberia. I escaped—and that is all!'

The Grand Duke was staring at the Eagle. 'Why, this is a second edition of yourself,' he said. 'Now, which, in wonder, *is* you?'

'I am I,' laughed Paul. 'This, I hope, is my brother. Perhaps your Highness may remember, when you were a child of twelve or so, the story of how my twin brother was carried away by wolves.'

'I think I do. It was told us in the nursery; so he has turned up! Where were you found, my friend?'

'In prison,' laughed the Eagle. 'Similar dispositions got us into similar trouble. Paul found his level in a Siberian prison, and so did I!'

'Birds of a feather, evidently,' said the Grand Duke. 'It's a curious tale. How came you to be here—just here, upon this hencoop?'

Paul explained. 'Like your Imperial Highness, we were spectators,' he said. 'Only you did your sightseeing more comfortably. We were following upon a hired junk.'

'I saw it. Makarof was within an ace of sinking it, fearing you might be some contrivance of the Japanese. Well, we are all suffering for our curiosity, I suppose!'

'Why, then, that must have been what the *Retvizan* thought of us, too!' exclaimed Paul. 'Her captain must have been suffering from terror—it was he that sank our unfortunate little junk—took us for a Japanese torpedo-boat in disguise, and sank us on the chance!'

The Grand Duke laughed. 'The pleasures of war!' he said. 'However, it was a good thing for *me* that you were floating about at the right moment and in the right place!'

A few moments later the Eagle called out that he saw torpedo-boats cruising about, doubtless in search of survivors from the ill-fated battleship.

'Jap or Russian?' asked Paul. 'You've the sharpest eyes, Eagle!'

'One is fairly close. I think—yes, it's ours!'

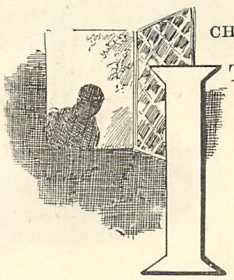
Paul stood up as high as he could. 'Yes,' he cried. 'Thank goodness, it *is* one of our own! Wave a handkerchief, Eagle; my hands are too frozen to move. I dare say they will catch sight of us presently. I'm as cold as an ice-block.'

A few minutes later their signals were observed, and within a quarter of an hour all three men were safe on board the little vessel which had sallied forth with others in order to pick up survivors of the ill-fated *Petropavlofsk*, and presently they found themselves on land, safe, but half-frozen with cold. Here, amid the excitement following upon the loss of the great battleship and the safety of his Highness the Grand Duke, the insignificant question of how Paul and the Eagle happened to have been afloat upon the hencoop was lost sight of; so, also, was the fact that but for the exertions of the twins his Imperial Highness would probably have been drowned. Fortunately for them, however, as shall presently be shown, the Grand Duke was not unmindful of the service rendered him, and though he soon left Port Arthur, and returned to St. Petersburg, without taking further notice of his preservers, the memory of their good offices remained with him.

(*Continued on page* 319.)

NOBODY'S DOG.

(*Continued from page* 299.)



CHAPTER XIV.

IT was some little time before I could sleep as I lay beside Bristles. He, too, seemed to be sleeping with one ear open, for he kept it perked up to listen for the least noise that should bode danger to his old master, though he snored comfortably at the same time. More than once I was tempted to bark, as some faint sound, new to me, broke the dead silence of the sleeping woods: the tread of some wild creature, a stealthy fox or a rabbit, pilfering by moonlight in the garden; the hoot of an owl, or the far-off footfall of some lonely traveller along the road, on some tangled bypath.

Once I growled in a low tone, as the sturdy tramp of a man paused for an instant at the little gate leading up to Pinch's cottage.

'Hold your tongue, do,' muttered Bristles. 'It's only the village constable on his beat. Don't you put in your oar. Don't you suppose I shall take notice if anything is wrong? I wasn't in the police force with my master for nothing, young Ignorance.' He snored for a moment, and then resumed, quite gruffly, 'Speak when you're spoken to, bark when you're bid. To kick up a shindy at the wrong time is quite the worse mistake a dog can make—at times, quite a sin.'

He snored again, and his one open ear quivered from time to time when distant disturbances kept me on the alert.

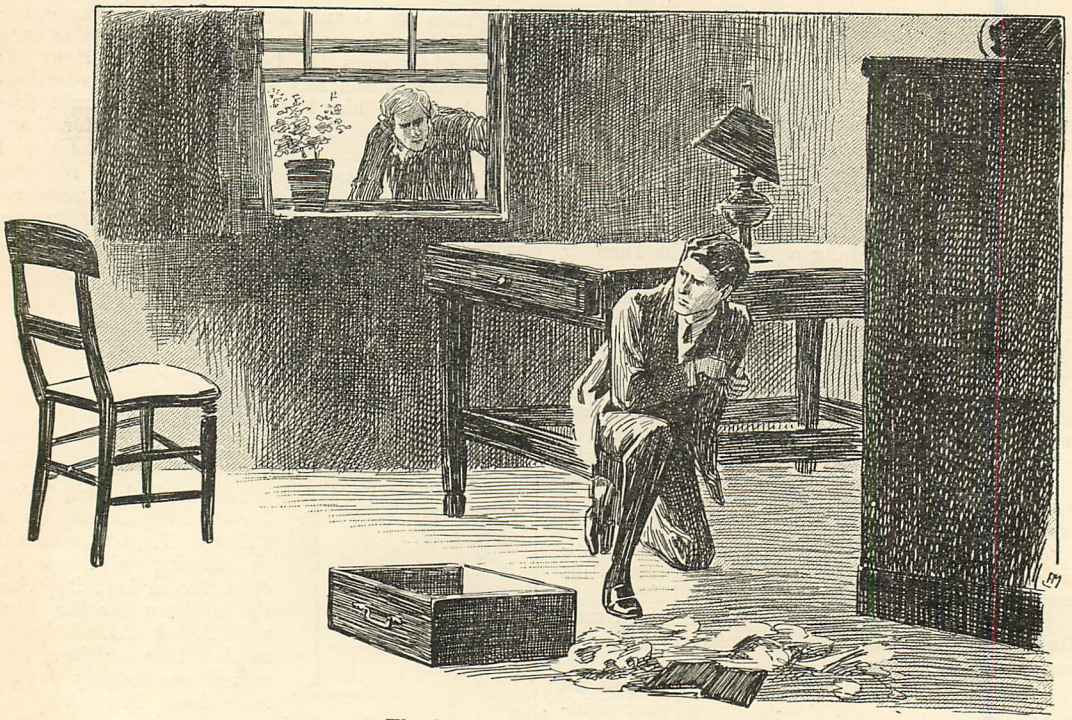
'Poachers are no business of mine,' grumbled old Bristles, stretching out his stiff old legs.

At last I too fell into a deep sleep, and dreamt that I was running along very fast on my way back to Luke. I was waked by Bristles, who, to my surprise, was standing by me very much on the *qui vive*.

'Keep quiet,' he said. 'Jenny is stirring in the shed at the back. She has heard something with those long ears of hers. Presently we shall hear something, too, or else I'm a Dutch dog.'

We both listened breathlessly.

'Somebody is trying the window at the back,'



"The light fell on his pale face."

whispered Bristles, 'and now he is treading on tiptoe under the cottage wall, round to the front door. Keep quiet, I tell you, you little idiot! There, it is a man—only a man—and he has got his hand on the lock now. Ah-ha! but it's bolted, my fine fellow! Now for the kitchen window.'

'But I can't hear anything,' said I.

'I dare say not—I dare say not. How can a youngster like you know anything? You never were in the Force, I think. Hush! Lie still! He is trying the kitchen window next. I shall step upstairs now, and ask for my orders.'

Bristles then walked upstairs as cool as a cucumber, and scraped three times at Daddy's door, just as he was in the habit of doing to call him every morning. I could not help following him.

'Time to get up already?' we heard Daddy say, his bedstead creaking as he turned round. 'It's hardly daylight yet. Bristles must have mistaken the moon for the sun.' But he got up and opened the door.

Bristles stared hard in his master's face, his head screwed round to the left, as if to say, 'Is "bark" the word?—or am I to bite?—or, in short, what am I to do? You see, I am ready to put my best leg foremost.'

From the look and manner of the dog, his old friend and master was able to read much.

'Quiet, boy; all snug,' he said, and leaning forward, with one hand behind his ear, listened intently. 'Somebody's getting in at the kitchen window,' he muttered. Then, after hastily dressing, and carrying his shoes in his hand, he crept, with the noiseless foot of a trained spy, down the staircase, out by the back door, which he locked after him, into the garden.

Followed by Bristles and myself, Daddy Pinch stole softly round to the kitchen window. It was open, and apparently the person who had undone the fastenings was now inside, since he was not to be seen elsewhere.

Daddy advanced, and put his head and shoulder into the kitchen. There in the dim room, into which the faint morning light was beginning to creep, his back towards the window, and busily engaged in rummaging among the odds-and-ends in Daddy's old press, knelt a man. He was in search of something, for he impatiently emptied the contents of the last drawer on to the floor, and, hastily pocketing some small, dark object, turned to make his way out as he had come. As he did so, the light fell on his pale face, and revealed the features of Rupert Eversley.

(*Continued on page* 318.)

SOME LONDON PARKS.

III.—BATTERSEA PARK.

FOR some four hundred and fifty years of the Middle Ages, the Manor of Battersea, with the surrounding land, belonged to the Church. Henry VIII. transferred the property to the Crown, but did little to improve the land; indeed, up to 1850, the site of the present park was badly kept waste land, a disgrace to the metropolis.

In the sixteenth century, Battersea was under

Fallow Deer in Battersea Park.

water at every high tide, but in Mary's reign a rough embankment was made, which more or less kept out the water, and the recovered land became the property of the Lord of the Manor.

Battersea Fields possessed an evil reputation for several centuries, highwaymen, thieves, and cut-throats plying their trades in its narrow lanes and marshes. Here Charles II. nearly met his death.

Colonel Blood, one of his graceless companions, hid in some reeds by the river-side, purposing to shoot his master whilst bathing; however, at the last moment his aim was diverted by a feeling of awe which came over him. This was his own fashion of accounting for his failure, given in open court when, somewhat later, he was put upon his trial for an attempt to steal the crown jewels from the Tower, disguised as a clergyman. When discovered he had the crown hidden away under the folds of his gown.

In the duelling era, Battersea Fields was a favourite meeting-place, and here, on March 21st, 1829, the great Duke of Wellington (who might have known better) met the young Marquis of Winchelsea. The hero of Waterloo had the first shot, which pierced the hat of the Marquis, who generously fired in the air and came forward to apologise, so bringing the encounter to an end.

For many years part of the Battersea land was laid out as market gardens, the rest being roughly enclosed and used as a kind of Fair Garden, where, on Sundays, horse-racing, donkey-riding, fortune-telling, and various rough sports attracted enormous crowds; often, on fine days, from ten to fifteen thousand people landing from the river alone. The place got an even worse name from this 'fair' than in the old cut-throat days, and finally the Government interfered, and appointed commissioners to consider the state of things, who laid out the present park at a cost of three hundred and eighteen thousand pounds. The grounds cover one hundred and eighty acres, and contain a well-wooded lake abounding with water-lilies and many aquatic birds, and a wonderful sub-tropical garden, where in the summer all manner of half-hardy plants are to be seen. There are also two gymnasiums, a bandstand, a chrysanthemum-house, and a small aviary of owls, and a larger aviary containing, among other birds, two big ravens; and half-a-dozen deer have a large paddock all to themselves. A unique attraction of Battersea Park is its position along the bank of the Thames, and in summer the river walks are thronged, especially on Saturday afternoon, when thousands of the labouring people, and indeed of the very poorest, arrive by steamer to enjoy a happy afternoon at a trifling outlay. The broad road round the park makes a fine bicycle track; cricket, football, tennis, croquet, and bowls are played in season, and there is a soft road for riding, very like the famous 'Rotten Row' in Hyde Park.

A favourite point of interest lies outside the park, the 'Dogs' Home,' where many owners go to seek lost animals, or secure an unclaimed stray dog for a pet. This is an admirable institution. The scene there is at once interesting and pitiful, for there is perhaps no sadder sight than a lost dog, and here there are many hundreds of all kinds.

NOT TO BE CAUGHT.

WHEN I have run about all day,
I'm very tired at night;
But all the tiredness goes away
Before the morning light.

I wanted very much to see
Just how the tiredness went,
And whether, after leaving me,
It somewhere else was sent.

And so one night awake I lay
Until long after ten,
To watch the tiredness go away,
And see what happened then.

But oh, it seemed a long, long time
To lie awake in bed;
Twice over every nursery rhyme
I said out of my head.

And still the tiredness did not go;
It just came more and more,
And each half-hour I seemed to grow
More sleepy than before.

And then at last asleep I fell:
I woke when it was day.
The tiredness—how I cannot tell—
Had vanished quite away.

So I suppose the tiredness goes
While you are fast asleep,
And waits until your eyes you close,
For fear lest you should peep;

And does not make a bit of noise,
For, if they woke to watch it,
Some curious little girls or boys
Might run and somehow catch it;

And shut it up, and bind it tight,
And tie it to a chain:
So that it never, never might
Come bothering them again.

THE SERVING-WOMAN'S REVENGE.

IT was a dull January day, more than four hundred years ago, and the scholars of the Cathedral school at York were trooping out of school. They appeared deeply excited, and, instead of hurrying homewards for their evening meal, as was their wont, they stood in groups about the narrow streets, eagerly discussing some important matter.

It wanted just four weeks to Shrovetide, when a great game of football was played, not in the broad playing-fields down by the river, but in the narrow streets, between the boys of the upper school and those of the lower.

That afternoon the captains had been chosen. This was done by vote, and the two boys who had been elected were strangely unlike each other. One of them, Jack Tillotson, was a big, swarthy fellow, strongly built, and it was felt that he would make a capital leader; the other, Piers Walker, the silversmith's son, was a fair-haired, delicate lad, with gentle manners, and a sweet, low voice, and some of the boys openly expressed their fears that he would have little chance of leading his side to victory.

'You have your task before you, if you would win, Piers,' said his friend, Philip Brandon, as they walked homewards along the narrow Bulshergate. 'You are a nimble runner and your eye is wondrous sure,

but it takes a strong arm and a loud tongue to fight the Shrovetide football fight, and to keep your followers together in these narrow streets and alleys.'

'I know it well,' said Piers, 'and I wonder much that I was chosen captain. But what is this?' he exclaimed, as they approached a group of boys who were standing in a circle round a curiously dressed country-woman, whose worn shoes and mud-bespattered attire showed that she had travelled a considerable distance on foot. She was evidently in great distress, for she was wringing her hands and uttering broken sentences in a dialect which was difficult to understand.

Instead of rousing their compassion, her outlandish tongue was evidently a source of amusement to the boys who surrounded her, for they were jeering at her and pulling her dress, and one big fellow, bolder than the rest, had caught up a bundle which she had placed on the ground, and was busy examining its contents.

'What a shame,' cried Piers indignantly, 'to torment a poor foreigner.'

'Foreigner, indeed!' cried the ringleader, who was no other than Jack Tillotson. 'She is a beggarly Scot, come to seek her sister-in-law, so she says. Come to beg from door to door more likely.'

A laugh went round the group of boys at the words, for at that time the English and the Scotch were often at war with one another, and there was no love lost between the two nations.

'Scot or no Scot,' went on Piers, 'you should be ashamed of yourself, Jack, to torment a woman in that way. Poor thing! she looks as though she had travelled many a mile on foot.'

Perhaps Jack Tillotson and his companions did feel a little ashamed of themselves, for they moved on without further comment, leaving Piers and Philip standing beside the poor traveller, who sank to the ground as if exhausted.

'Where have you come from, my poor woman?' said Piers kindly; 'can we direct you to any place of shelter for the night?'

The woman looked at him dully. 'God bless you for your kind words, young sir,' she said, 'for I stand sore in need of them. Many a weary mile have I tramped from Edinburgh to seek my soldier brother's widow, who lived here in York, but, lack-a-day, I find she hath been dead these three months, and where to turn for shelter I know not—I have no money, I spent my last groat this morning, and though I could work for my bread as a serving-woman, I fear me no one would take me in this guise, or trust me for an honest woman.'

Piers hesitated; then he pulled a piece of silver out of his pocket and pressed it into her hand. 'Take that,' he said kindly, 'and buy yourself some food, and then perchance you might inquire if they need help at the "Red Glove." It is an old inn which stands opposite my father's shop, and the landlady, good Mistress Daker, has lain a-bed with the ague these last three weeks: mayhap she would be glad of your services. I heard some one say she was looking out for a serving-woman.'

A look of hope came over the stranger's face. 'I can go and inquire, young sir,' she said, 'and if I have the good luck to be taken in, I promise that the landlady will never rue the day she trusted me, and you will have laid a debt of gratitude on my shoulders that I shall be hard put to to repay.'

A month passed, and one afternoon the streets of the old city were crowded, for this was the day on which the schoolboys were to play their game of football, and many citizens had turned out to watch the fun.

At first no one doubted which side would win. Jack Tillotson was so much bigger and stronger than Piers Walker that it seemed as if all the advantage lay with his side; but little by little Piers and his followers drove the ball away from the goal which Jack was aiming at, and nearer and nearer the goal which they were striving for.

With breathless interest the onlookers watched the conflict. Would the delicate lad, who was a favourite with every one, be able to lead his followers to victory? It looked like it, for they had almost passed up the narrow street in which Piers' father's shop was, and at the end of which stood the goal.

Then they began to waver. One boy missed the ball altogether, and with a triumphant shout Jack Tillotson caught it, and kicked it back some twenty yards. With whitening cheeks and panting breath Piers flew after it. There were tears in his blue eyes. He had been so near victory, and now he was like to lose it. If only he could get one fair kick at the ball, he thought, even now, he might aim sure and drive it through the goal.

But Jack Tillotson and two of his friends were too quick for him. They dashed past, and Jack raised his foot to send the ball still further to the rear. Piers ground his teeth in despair!

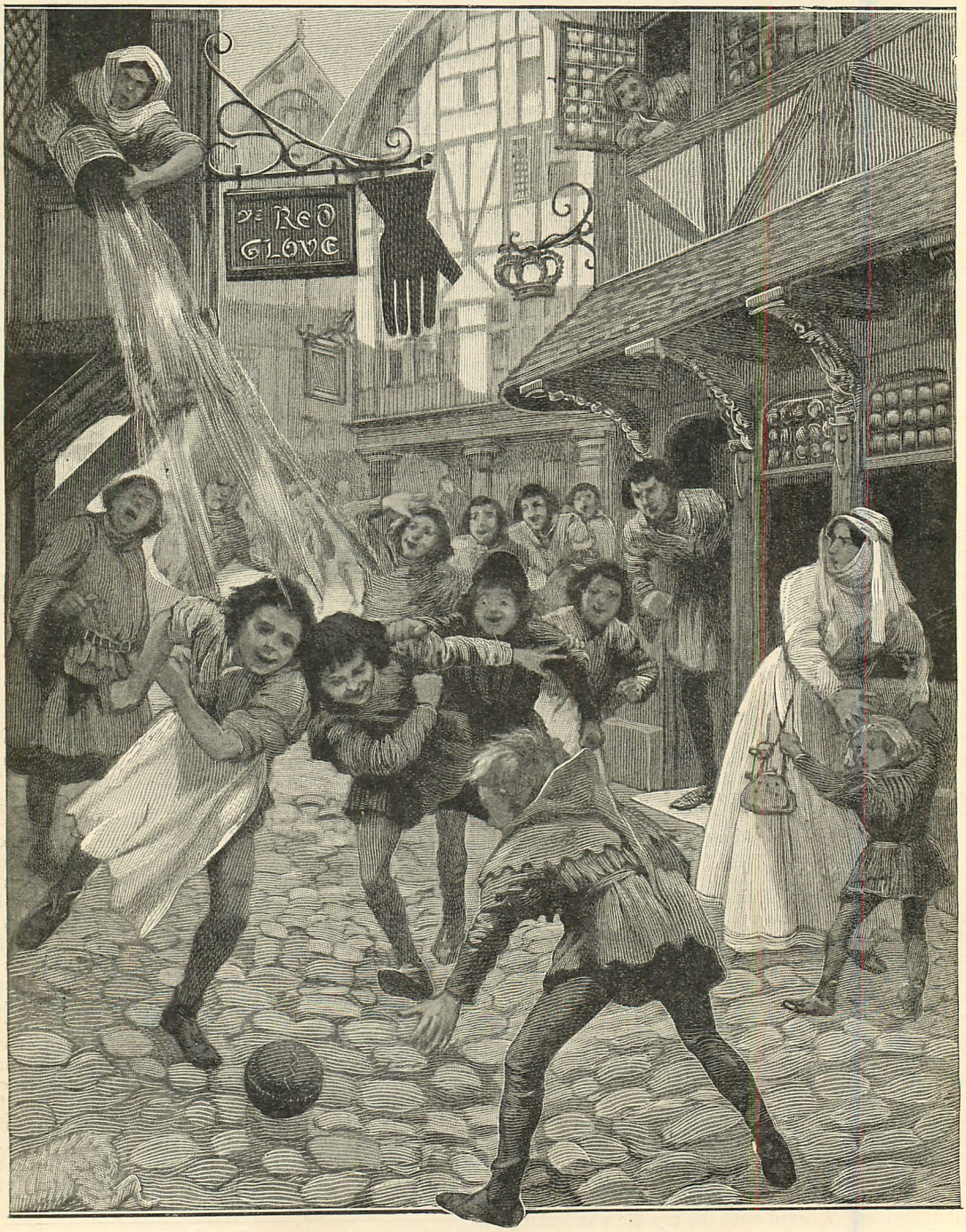
Then, suddenly, something happened. They were just under the windows of the 'Red Glove,' and without any warning the new serving-woman whom the landlady had taken in without a character, to every one's astonishment, and whom she was never tired of praising, thrust her head out of the lattice, crying in her uncouth accent, 'Gardez l'eau, gardez l'eau!'* and next moment a great bucketful of dirty water came right down on Jack Tillotson's head.

Jack started back, gasping and spluttering, and the ball rolled right to Piers' feet. Piers was quick to seize his opportunity. With one clean kick he sent it straight to the goal, amidst the shouts and laughter of the bystanders, who were delighted to think that after all he had won the game.

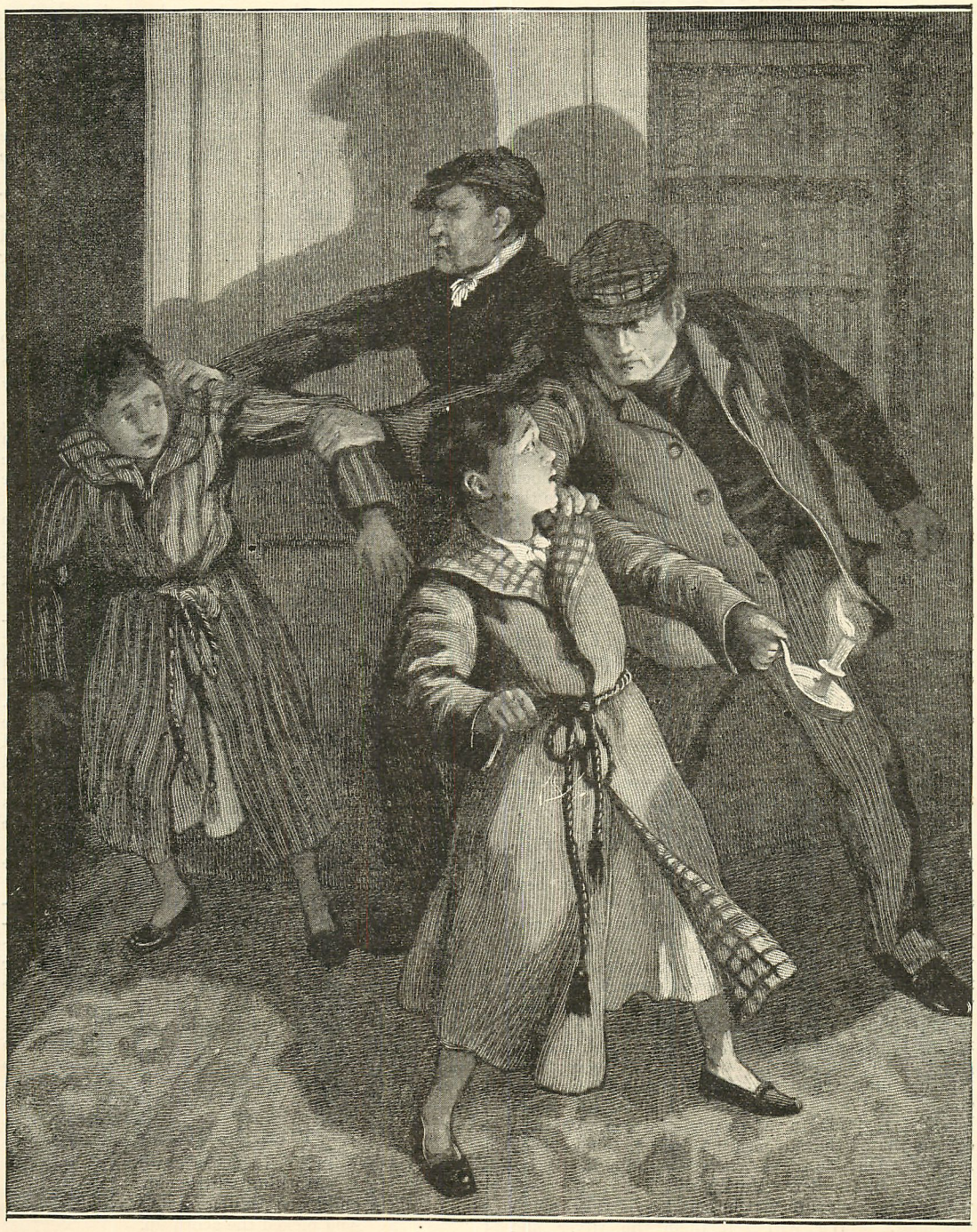
That evening Piers happened to meet the Scotch-woman. 'My best thanks, Mistress,' he said. 'Your pail of water stood me in good stead this afternoon. Did you throw it on purpose, or came it by chance?'

The woman laughed. 'I have not lived in the High Street of Edinburgh for nigh forty years for naught, young sir,' she answered. 'I know to a nicety how to give a wet skin to any one whom I have a grudge against. With the help of my pail of water I paid two debts this afternoon—one to you, and I wish it had cost me more, and one to that great bouncing fellow, who thought no shame of flouting me in my hour of need.'

* It was the custom for the housewives who lived in the High Street and Canongate of Edinburgh, to empty their dirty water out of their windows, after having first warned the passers-by by the French phrase, 'Gardez l'eau!' (take care of the water).



"A bucketful of dirty water came down on his head."



"'Show us where the plate is hidden.'"

PETER'S PLUCK.

AS a rule, Peter disliked the holidays; that is, when they were spent at home. He was an only child, and his mother, who was very fond of entertaining, generally had the house filled with guests, and to Peter the holidays seemed one long round of wearing his best suit, with painfully clean collar and cuffs, and handing tea and cake to the smartly gowned ladies, whose frills and flounces *would* get tangled up with his feet as he made his way about the drawing room.

But one Easter holiday-time Peter enjoyed himself hugely. In the first place, Mrs. Talbot had allowed him to bring home his special chum, Mark Lesley; in the second, there was great excitement in the neighbourhood over two or three daring burglaries that had recently taken place in the neighbourhood. Peter and Mark instantly constituted themselves amateur detectives, but in spite of all the mysterious clues which they followed, they were no nearer a detection of the culprits than were the proper detective force.

'Suppose the burglars come to-night, Peter,' said one of the guests teasingly to the boy one afternoon at tea. 'You see, as we are all going over to the ball at the Towers, it would be a splendid opportunity for them to call here.'

Peter was not at all alarmed.

'No hope of it,' he said, mournfully.

'You would be afraid when the time came,' said she; but Peter shook his head.

'We have got a ripping plan, Mark and I,' he said, his eyes sparkling. 'If they come here, they're caught.'

The lady laughed. 'Bravo, Peter,' she said. 'Take care of them till we come home again, won't you?'

'They won't come, just because we are ready for them,' said Mark.

'It's always the unexpected that happens,' answered their questioner, and the subject was changed.

And for once the unexpected did happen.

Soon after midnight Peter roused Mark, whispering excitedly, 'They're here, Mark, they're here!'

In an instant the boys were silently out of bed, and had slipped on socks and dressing-gowns.

'You remember the plan?' whispered Peter, and Mark, nodding, followed his friend out on to the wide landing. Somehow the plan was not quite so fascinating out in those dark, ghostly corridors, when the great house was silent and deserted, save for the faint sound coming from the library. As they neared the door of this room, Peter slipped, making just enough sound to put the burglars on their guard, for the filing sound stopped. Mark felt his teeth chatter, and even Peter noticed that his knees knocked together in a strange fashion, yet the excitement of the adventure helped to choke back his fear. Outside the door the boys stopped.

'They are in here, Mark,' said Peter, in a stage whisper, making sure that he could be heard through the door. 'We will tell them the silver and jewellery is in that cupboard on the first corridor, then when they go in, we will lock the door on them. They will never think of moving the mat outside Mother's door, and looking under the floor-boards.'

Then he turned the handle very cautiously, as if trying not to make a noise, and entering, the boys were confronted by a pair of men, whose villainous appearance made Peter feel for the moment as though he must scream, and run away as hard as he could. But his shoulder was gripped in an instant by one of the men, while the other captured Mark.

'Now, youngster,' he said, 'just show us where the plate and stuff is hidden. No noise, or it will be the worse for you.'

Apparently overawed by the man's demand, Peter led the way upstairs, but his trembling was quite genuine; he and Mark were so very small compared with these ruffians. At the end of the corridor Peter opened a cupboard door.

'Try there,' he said, as bravely as he could.

The man winked at his mate.

'In there, is it?' he said. 'Well, you kids can go in and fetch it. I'm not having any,' and with that, before the boys could speak, he forced them in, locking the door carefully, with a chuckle.

'Thought we couldn't hear you whispering outside, didn't you?' he taunted. 'But you don't catch Jim Byles with chaff. Now you just stop quiet till we have finished this little game. Your folk will be home within an hour or so.'

The men evidently knew that they could not be heard from the servants' wing, which was shut off from the rest of the house, but they did not know that inside the cupboard Peter was grinning at Mark with the joy of a successful strategist.

'Now for the door-mat,' he heard burglar No. 1 remark, and he grinned again, knowing that the instant the floor-board under the mat was touched, an alarm would ring in the butler's room, and that in a few moments butler and footman would be on the spot. So it all happened. While Jim and his friend were still endeavouring to prise open the box they had found under the floor-board, they were confronted with three strong, burly men, evidently prepared to meet them, and despite their struggles, the burglars were overpowered, and bound up safely to await the arrival of the police.

Released from captivity, Peter felt quite brave again, as he took another look at Jim Byles.

'Why didn't you take my advice?' he said reproachfully to the man, who scowled at him without a word. 'The plate was in the cupboard all the time, you know; Mark and I moved it the other day, because we hoped you might call round one night, and swallow a little chaff.'

But when he realised how he had been outwitted by this cheeky schoolboy, Jim's abuse became so eloquent that the butler packed both boys back to bed.

THE ACORN.

A TINY little acorn grew
Within its little cup;
A child was passing on its way,
And picked the acorn up.
Beneath a little mound of soil
He set the acorn small;
Then ran away to play, and thought
No more of it at all.

Years passed; the sun with fervent heat
Smote fiercely on the head:
A weary traveller passed along
And sought some grateful shade.
He sat him down beneath an oak;
Oh, little did he know
The tree had from the acorn grown
He planted long ago.

So do our little deeds of good,
When long years pass away,
Come back, and with them blessings bring
In strange and wondrous way;
And, like to bread in listless mood
Upon the waters cast,
Return to us, all sweet with good,
And bless us at the last.

ELENA AND THE TURKEY-COCK.

A True Story.

WHEN you think of Italy, I dare say you only think of sunny skies and olive-trees, fruitful vineyards, and cooling ices, or perhaps of organ-grinders and coral-sellers. Perhaps you never dream of the thousands of boys and girls who live pretty much as you do yourselves, go to school or do lessons at home, are good or naughty, lazy or diligent, kind or unkind.

I know a little Italian girl, who, indeed, eats grapes instead of gooseberries, macaroni instead of Yorkshire pudding, but who is not so very different from you in England. 'When she is good, she is very, very good, but when she is bad, she is horrid.' She was scowling when I saw her a little while ago, because her little sister had had, she declared, a nicer doll than hers. Of course it was not really so; she would have grumbled just the same that day had she had the other doll. When I entered she brightened up wonderfully, for I had always tried to amuse her, and she knew I was sure to have something for her in my pocket, something at which she might, of course, grumble afterwards.

'Oh, Uncle Leo!' she cried, 'you have come in time for the vintage. Shall you trample on the grapes?'

Little Rosina looked at me shyly. She did not know me so well. I was not really their uncle, it was only a courtesy title, and she seemed to be wondering where I had come from. She soon came forward, however, with a pretty little smile, and held up her dolly for me to kiss. I really had forgotten her, and had only brought a book for Elena; but, happily, a box of chocolate-drops I happened to have made up for my forgetfulness.

'These are the first stories your Uncle Leo wrote, Elena,' I said, laughing. 'I hope you will like them.'

'She reads quite nicely now,' said her mother, glad to see her look pleased.

Alas! half an hour had scarcely passed when a burst of tears and sobs from Elena startled us.

'Nasty, horrid book!' she exclaimed, throwing it on the floor. 'Uncle Leo had no business to write about me. Tell him to go away. He will be writing other stories about me.' And her sobs grew more and more violent.

Laughingly I took up the book. 'The Discontented Child' was the title of the tale she had been reading.

'My dear Elena,' said I, 'that tale was written long ago, a year before you were born, so it can't be about you. Do you think "Sophia" in it is like you?'

'No,' said she, distressed at having accused herself so funnily. 'No, I don't. But you will be writing about Rosina and me, and you have no business to.'

'Elena!' said her mother, warningly.

'I want to write something very nice about you,' remarked I, still laughing, 'but you must let me see only nice things to-day. Now, don't be afraid. I have come to see your father and mother, not to write stories, though, you know, I *may* do so.'

'Run away, now, children!' commanded their mother, and off they went to the threshing-floor, where the golden grains of the maize were being piled up.

'Mother!' called little Rosina, not long after, 'Desiderio says the grapes against the wall are ripe. May we have some?'

Out we went, for muscatel grapes are delicious. We found, however, that there were very few bunches ripe. Two tiny ones were handed to the children. Rosina clapped her hands with glee. 'Oh, how good! how good!'

Elena, however, chose to sulk, and, with another ugly scowl, exclaimed, 'Oh, Mother, I don't want this little bunch! I shan't eat it. Give me another, do!'

'Not to-day,' was Mother's reply. 'Now, just taste how nice they are.'

But Elena kept dangling the bunch in her hand, and making discontented remarks, and pouting like the little goose she was.

But strange things happen sometimes! A sly old turkey-cock was just crossing the threshing-floor, where he had been pecking at the maize; and how he gurgled with joy at the sight of that bunch of grapes hanging from Elena's hand!

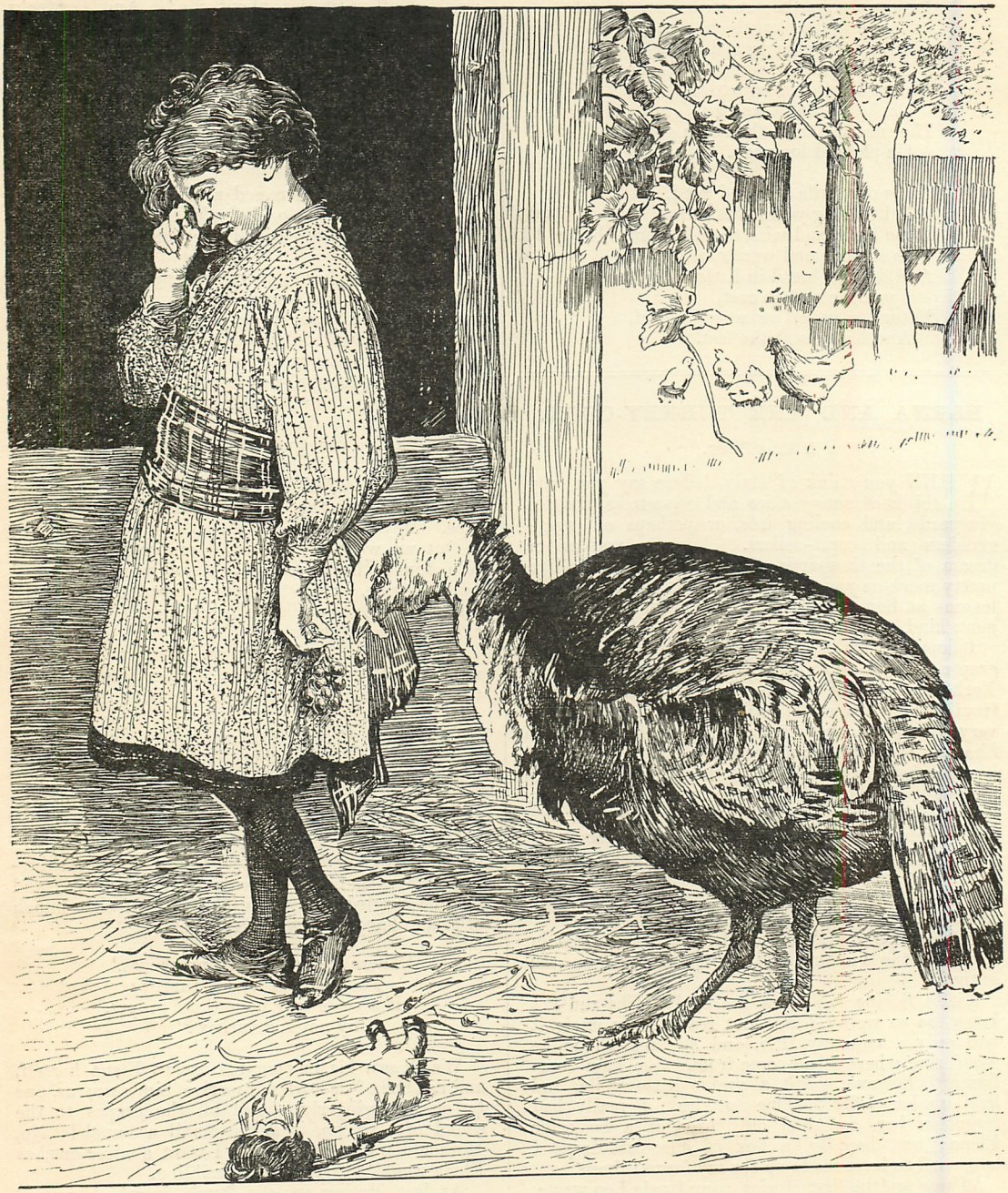
'There are geese in many shapes,'
Thought the sly old turkey;
'If a *goose* may have those grapes,
Why not I, a turkey?'

We all saw his manœuvres except Elena herself, and not one of us stirred to drive him away as, one by one, he gingerly picked off the grapes to the sound of 'No, no, it is too small a bunch! No, Mother, I won't eat it! No, I want a nicer one,' as Elena went on crying and grumbling.

At last Mother gave a laugh, in which we all joined, and exclaimed, 'Now, Elena, where are your grapes gone? That is a wise old turkey!'

'Uncle Leo's got his story, Elena,' said little Rosina, whose sense of humour overcame her pity for her sister.

A gasp of astonishment, a cry of rage against the sly old turkey, a burst of tears—and, at last, I am happy to say, a laugh at her silly self—ended the



"The old turkey-cock picked off the grapes."

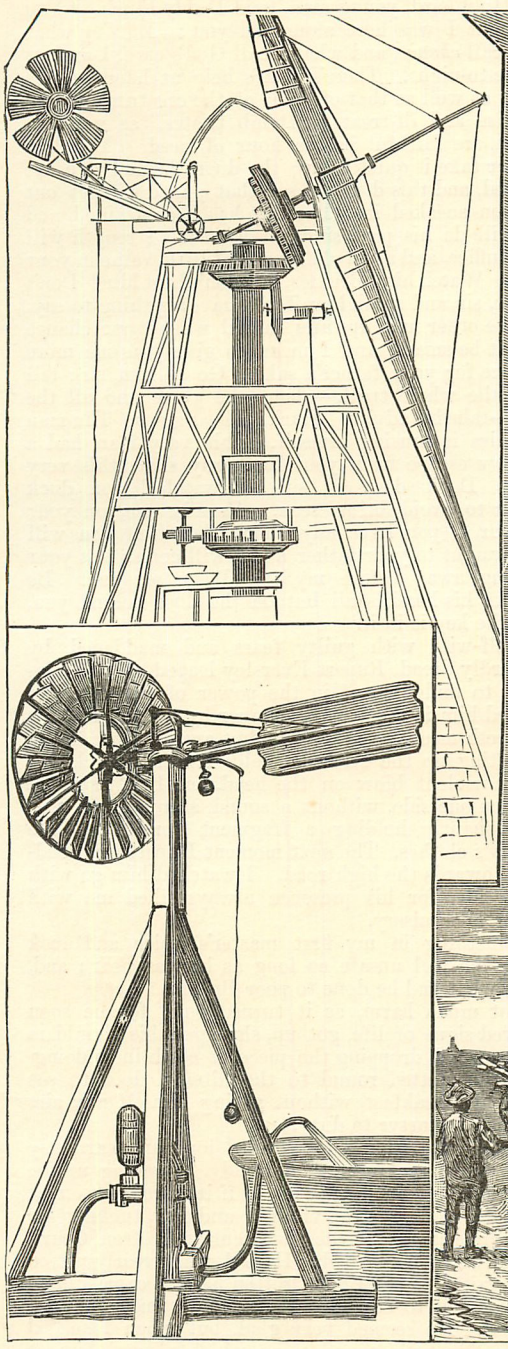
comical scene; but even now—and a year or two has passed since then—when Elena grumbles, her mother exclaims, 'Please will somebody go and fetch the turkey?'

I may say now that Uncle Leo has also many nicer things to tell both about Elena and Rosina.

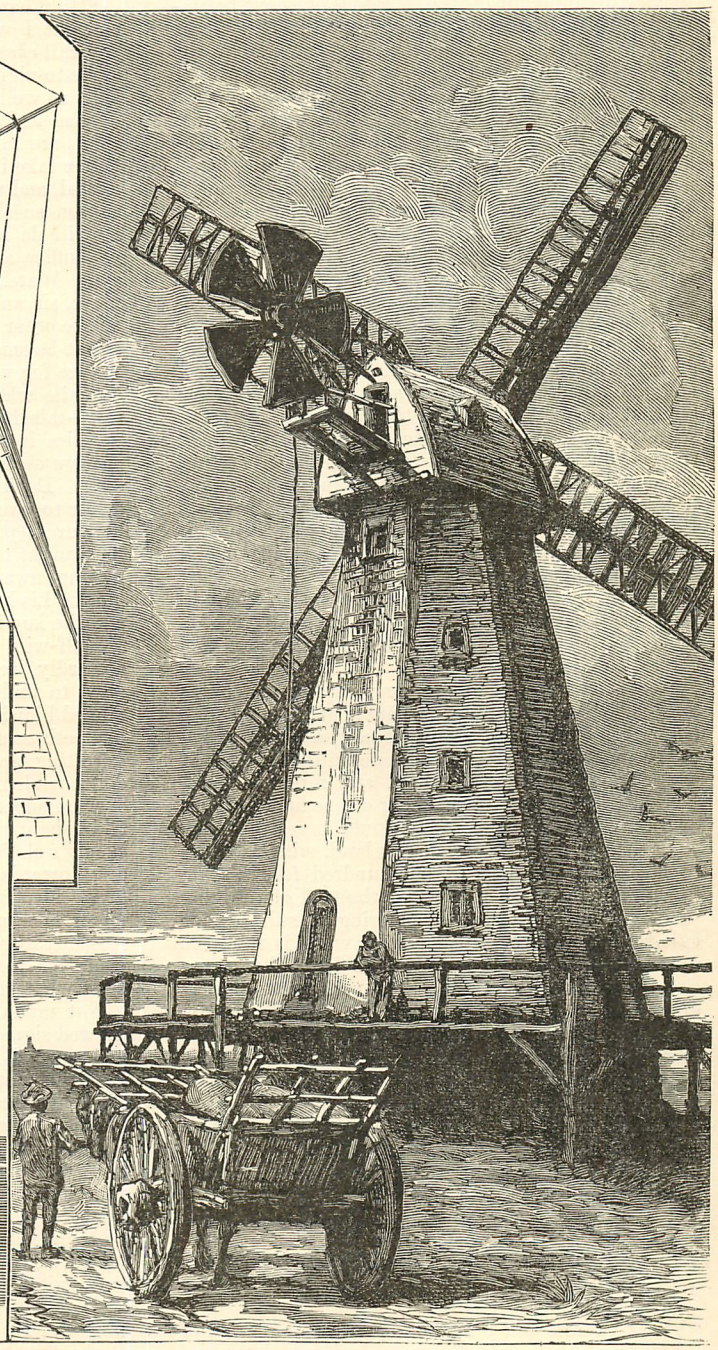
LITTLE GIANTS OF LABOUR.

VII.—WINDMILLS.

ALMOST as long as there has been corn to grind there have been mills of various forms to grind it, and though the water-wheel has done its



Section of Windmill.
Windmill for Pumping Water.



Windmill for Grinding Corn.

part, the windmill has been ready to work where tne water-wheel would have to stand idle. The winds blow everywhere, while cascades and swift-flowing rivers are only found among the hills. Yet, while the current of water always flows in the same direction, the wind is constantly changing its quarter, and it was soon found that to be really useful the windmill must be so constructed as to turn

its face to any point of the compass without hesitation. This is accomplished by making the upper portion, or cap as it is called, separate from the body' of the mill, and erecting on the rear part of the cap a small wheel like those paper windmills we have so often played with. As the breeze strikes this wheel it spins it rapidly round. The action sets in motion a small toothed wheel working in a ring of metal teeth which surrounds the top of the tower. The little cog does not rest until it has worked the cap round for the great sails to face the wind. Before this self-acting method was invented, the miller had to find out where the wind was blowing from, and then, with great labour, push his mill round himself.

If we went inside on a windy day, this is what we should see. A strong steel axle, to which the sails are fixed, has a small cog-wheel attached to its inner end, and as it revolves it turns a large wheel lying at right angles to it. From the centre of this latter wheel, a shaft descends to the bottom of the mill and carries on its lower end another large toothed wheel, which sets the millstones in motion. Sometimes as many as five pairs of millstones are driven by this wheel; but if the wind is not very strong, it is relieved of such heavy work by throwing one or more pairs out of gear.

As the wind labours without wages, the windmill is a good servant, and proves of great use in newly settled colonies where steam-power and fuel cannot be obtained.

At Faversham a windmill for pumping water was erected, which proved itself capable of working with a strength equal to fifteen horse-power. In a period of ten months it lifted twenty-one million gallons of water from a well one hundred and nine feet deep. By so doing it saved the burning of one hundred tons of coal, which a steam-engine would have demanded.

In the eastern counties of England, windmills are to be found with sails of one hundred feet in span. Such giants as these performed the task of draining the great fen district, and rendering it suitable for cultivation. Indeed, this class of work is now the principal duty of the windmill, and has led to many changes in its construction. The usual form consists of a wheel of flat spokes, made like a circular fan. In some instances the spokes are so arranged that when the wind is *too* strong they will turn their edges toward it, and so, by escaping the main force, revolve at a steady, uniform speed.

The old windmill, however, for grinding corn, is rapidly being supplanted in England by various quicker-working machines, and the number of mills in use grows less every year.

NOBODY'S DOG.

(*Continued from page* 308.)

'WHAT are you doing here, sir, at this time of night?' asked Pinch. 'Isn't poaching and gambling and manslaughter enough, but you must add burglary to the list?'

'I only wanted my own,' said Eversley. 'My glove that you taunt me with, and hold like a sword over my head! Stand out of my way, or I will knock you down with your own poker!'

'Hold hard, young man,' said Daddy Pinch. 'You thought I was here alone, did you? But, by what you call *chance*, and what I call God's care, I am not alone to-night. There's man's help at hand—man's help, as well as that of some of the creatures you so despise and ill-treat. "Dumb brutes," as you call them, are faithful in the hour of need. You had better take it quietly, sir; the doors behind you are locked, and this dog will see that you don't get out as you sneaked in. The dog has been trained, and he will do his part, since an old man's strength will not suffice, and as an old man is of little value in your eyes. Watch him, Bristles, but don't hurt him! Don't move, sir, and speak low, if you have anything to say. If the other man upstairs should wake, your chance might be small; and I mean to give you one more chance for your father's sake. Go to him, sir; tell him the whole truth—about the glove, and all the rest—take his advice. Hark! I hear steps. The man upstairs is rousing himself. This very man had a narrow escape from your foolhardy shots this very day. Don't deny it, sir. I watched you duck down to avoid being seen. Promise me, on your honour, if you have any honour left, that you will go straight to your father, and I will connive at your getting away before my friend can see you. Be quick! his hand is all but on the door behind you, and the key is in it.'

Half-wild with guilty fears and maddened by cowardly dread, Rupert Eversley leaped at the window, to find himself in the power of Bristles, who pinned him in a scientific manner by the leg, making his teeth meet in the trouser, but avoiding the flesh.

Lifting up the stick he held, Rupert struck the dog a violent blow on the head, and Bristles rolled over on one side, without a sound, stunned, but still triumphantly holding a fragment torn from the enemy's clothes. The next moment Rupert was scudding towards the high road. I watched him go with great joy, for his presence always filled me with terror and misery.

Something in my first master's voice and look made me feel unsafe so long as he was near; and, now, what had he done to poor Bristles?

Not much harm, as it turned out; for he soon showed signs of life, got up, shrugged his shoulders and yawned, dropping the piece of cloth in so doing. He then trotted round to the kitchen door to see after his breakfast, without giving himself any airs of being a martyr to duty.

Daddy and Piping Pat talked long and earnestly over their breakfast; then Daddy, buttoning up the shred of cloth in his pocket, as if it were some great treasure, made for the village; and Pat, tucking me under one arm, took the short cut to Crofton Court, which we soon reached. Here I was greatly petted and praised—even Lady Crofton herself came out to see me, and to slip into Pat's hand something that jingled. He seemed very glad, but when I sniffed at the five little round coins, which pleased him so much, they seemed but stupid stuff; and I was better contented with my own present of five sweet biscuits.

After leaving the Court, Pat trusted me to run by myself, as he saw that I knew my way and was eager to hurry home. I was more than half-way there,

when, what familiar form did I see approaching? Surely it was Stubby!

Dear old fellow, how glad we were to meet! After walking round each other a few times in circles, as if we had never met before, which is the true doggy politeness, we rushed into each other's arms, and romped till we were worn out, then lay down to rest, and 'pass the time of day.'

'So far as dogs are concerned, the village has gone on much as usual since you left,' Stubby began. 'No new dogs have come to settle. I made friends with that great, hulking bulldog of Rupert Eversley's the other day, for I wanted to know the rights and wrongs about a little calf that was found dead—worried by a dog—on the Flat Crofts. Believe me or not, that surly-looking beggar is as mild as milk; but he told me he had done it. He pleaded his master's orders, and complained and said he had the death of Mary Rose's cat to answer for, and many more crimes; but, he added, and very sensibly, "What is a bulldog, or any dog, to do?" And he said he was very glad they were going to sell him, in consequence of the calf, though it wasn't his fault, as he got more kicks than halfpence from Rupert, and would rather belong to the butcher. But what,' broke off Stubby, in the middle of his narrative, 'what's all this crowd about? Rupert Eversley without a hat, and the leg of his trousers torn, and old Jones the constable holding him by one arm. Oh, I must run and sniff.'

I hung back, though Stubby the bold pressed forward. Soon the excited mob had passed, with a rabble trailing behind.

'He's been and gone and done it now,' said one man, in answer to a woman, who ran to her cottage door to ask the reason of the hubbub, 'and they are taking him to Sir William Crofton's. He's the nearest magistrate.'

'What for?'

'I don't know.'

'I am sorry for the family,' said the woman.

The cloud of dust raised by the footsteps of the crowd had hardly cleared away before I was again on my way homewards, Stubby at my side, chatting pleasantly.

'Old Jon and Dave have changed hands,' he remarked; 'but you will know all *that* news—mere human news—soon enough.'

Before long, the dear old church spire was in sight. I quickened my pace to a run—five minutes more, and I had left Stubby far behind, and was tearing by the door of the 'Hand-in-Glove.'

(*Continued on page* 327.)

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 307.)

PAUL and the Eagle went through many adventures during the siege of Port Arthur, which began soon after the events just recorded. Paul was badly wounded in one of those splendid fights for the fortifications, which were so heroically defended by the Russians, so desperately assaulted by the Japanese. It was thanks to the Eagle alone that Paul's life was saved on this occasion. One day a company of Russian soldiers, led by Paul, the Eagle, and other young officers, had sallied from their advanced trenches, in order to surprise the enemy, who had crept forward within a hundred yards of the first Russian line. The Russians were eventually forced back into their trenches, but upon reaching his own position in safety, Mark noticed that Paul had not returned. Instantly he sallied out to look for his brother, escaping bullets which whizzed above his head. He found Paul lying unconscious, and picked him up, half dragging, half carrying him towards the Russian lines. The chivalrous Japanese, seeing this, ceased firing, and cheered instead, shouting to the Eagle words of congratulation and encouragement, to which Mark responded by crying 'Banzai!' and waving his hand, to the delight of the enemy, who love to witness a brave action.

Paul was at death's door for a week, but afterwards slowly recovered, and when he was almost well it was the Eagle's turn to be wounded. His wound was comparatively slight, and for a fortnight the brothers were together in hospital.

When both were fairly off the sick list, a change came suddenly over their future, and it happened in this wise. Since the first days of the siege of Port Arthur, those living in the place had naturally been cut off from all communication with their friends in Russia and elsewhere. Imagine, if you can, the excitement and delight of the Russian defenders, when one night a steamer arrived, having run the blockade in safety, bringing into port not only a large cargo of provisions, but also a collection of mails and telegrams which had been called for at a French-Chinese port and brought to their destination.

Paul and the Eagle neither expected nor received any letters. They watched their more fortunate neighbours reading missives from mothers, wives, sisters—and envied them.

A brother officer, observing Paul's sorrowful expression, handed him a copy of a St. Petersburg newspaper.

'There, read that,' he said, 'while I devour my letters. See, I have three! One from my mother, one from my brother Petka at Kieff, and one from some one even dearer—my beloved Dunia, who is at home with my mother.'

Paul thanked his kind friend and took the paper. He had scarcely read it three minutes when he let it fall rustling to the ground, uttering an exclamation.

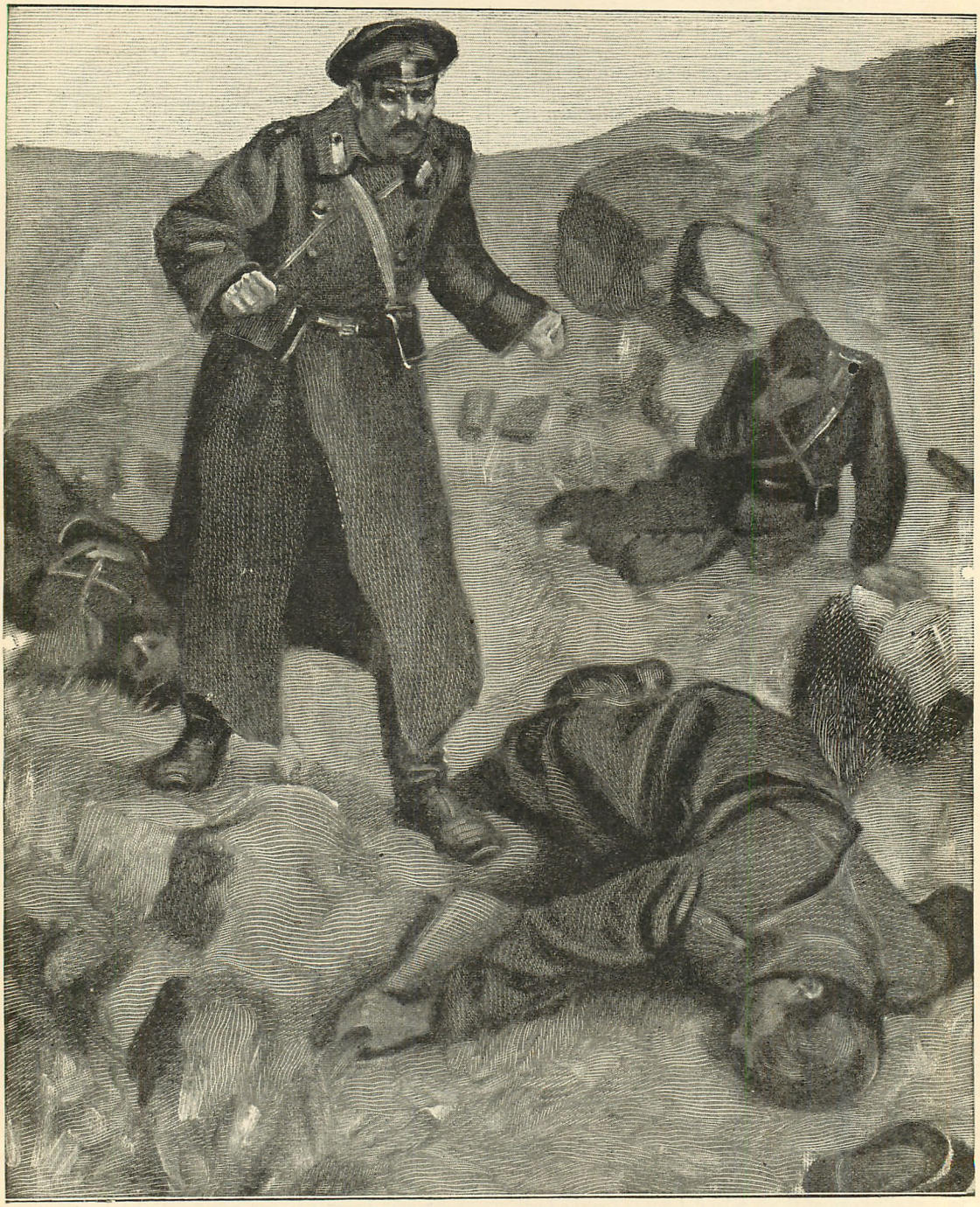
'What's the matter?' asked the Eagle, who had looked over his shoulder.

'Look!' said Paul, huskily—'there—in the column that deals with the rank and fashion of St. Petersburg.'

The Eagle looked, and this is what he found: 'We regret to learn that the Countess Stirinof lies dangerously ill at her family mansion.'

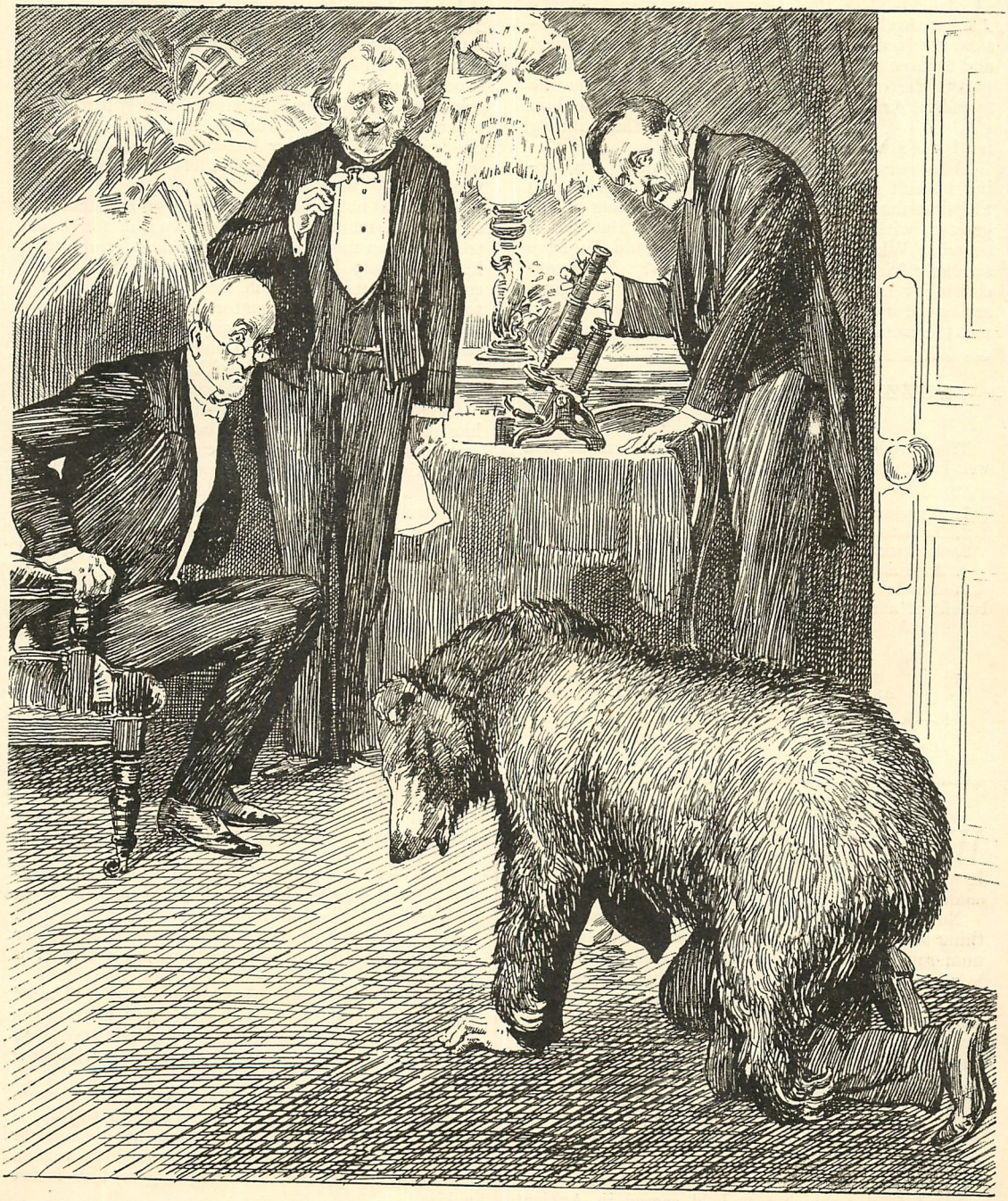
This news made Paul very miserable. It caused him to reflect that he had not been too good a son to his widowed mother; he had caused her sorrow by his foolishness and perverseness, and now, perhaps, he might never see her again. If he had known that none of his letters—he had written two or three since his escape—had reached her, his sorrow would have been doubly great.

(*Continued on page* 326.)



"He found Paul lying unconscious."

GOING ON PARADE.



"The Professor crawled into the drawing-room."

A PREDICAMENT.

A LEARNED Professor, an immense favourite with children, is said to have, upon one occasion, received two invitations for the same evening, and to have accepted both—one to a child's birthday party, the other to a dinner with some scientific friends. Arriving at the first house, he noticed in the hall a large bearskin rug, to which the grinning head was attached.

What an opportunity for fun! Quickly enveloping himself in the skin, the Professor crawled into the drawing-room with a growl, expecting to be greeted with shrieks of merriment. But not a sound! What was the matter? Could he have seriously frightened the dear children? Much concerned by this idea, the Professor ceased growling, and stood up. He had confused the gatherings, and met the wondering faces of his scientific friends!

PUZZLERS FOR WISE HEADS.

10.—Double Acrostic.

The uprights, read downwards, give the name of a well-known paper for children.

Cross Words.

1. A region.
2. To listen to.
3. To suck up.
4. A number.
5. A sum of money assessed on property for the benefit of a state.

R. M. B.

[*Answer on page* 354.]

Answer to Puzzle on Page 282.

9.—1. Marmalade. 2. Tapioca. 3. Cauliflower. 4. Pianoforte. 5. Automobile. 6. Onion.

TO PROTECT PUSSY.

WE all know the story of Dick Whittington's cat, and the fortune which it brought to its master. It was valuable, because it was the only cat in the country to which Dick carried it.

Nowadays—in England, at any rate—cats are anything but scarce. But that they were not always so numerous in the British Isles is proved by a curious law enacted in Wales in 938 A.D. This law fixed the price of cats according to age and quality, beginning with the price of a blind kitten. It decreed, moreover, that any one who should dare to steal or slay the cat which guarded the royal granary should be punished by the forfeiture of 'a milch ewe, its fleece and lamb, or as much wheat as, when poured on the body suspended by its tail, the head touching the floor, would form a heap high enough to cover the tip of the tail.'

Our domestic cat is the descendant of a very ancient family, which was held sacred in Ancient Egypt as far back as 1300 B.C. It is even said that our word 'Puss' comes from an Egyptian name for the cat. If, therefore, ancient lineage counts for anything, Pussy is certainly entitled to respect.

KITTY CLOVER'S CHRISTMAS EVE.

MANY years ago a couple of young people, man and wife, left their home in old England, in order to make their way in the wild West of North America. Neither John nor Kitty Clover had much experience, but they had good health, were honest, sober, and industrious, and most sincerely loved each other. They had with them little Patty, their only child, as sweet a clover blossom as one could see; her age at the time her parents left their native land was scarcely two years.

John did not seek the society or assistance of others, but, manfully hewing down the tough old trees, he soon made a clearing for himself, and, with his wife's help, built a log-cabin, which, although it consisted of only one room, was quite large enough to hold them all very comfortably. In those days the chimney of a log-cabin was made nearly half the size of the house, so that in cold weather the stone hearth might be piled high with great logs cut from the many trees around the clearing.

Of course, this little family had to endure many hardships in their new home, but, with good health and mutual love, they were contented and happy. Still, Kitty did feel lonely at times. If only John could have remained always at home all would have been well, but this could not be; it was necessary for him from time to time to carry his wheat to the mill to be ground into flour, and, the nearest mill being many miles away, poor Kitty had to remain over-night all alone in her forest home. Was she afraid of Indians?—of the wild red men who still roamed in thousands over the woods and prairies of the far West? Scarcely; the little clearing was never visited by any of the native races, save a few wandering Crees. When any of them made their appearance, begging for food or a blanket, Kitty had always been kind to them, though she kept little Patty in her arms all the time that such visitors were in the log-cabin.

'Suppose they were to run off with her darling!' thought the tender-hearted mother—'her dear little Patty! Oh! she could not live without Patty!'

Such was the state of matters when one morning—it was the twenty-fourth of December—John Clover found that an immediate visit to the mill was necessary if he did not wish to be altogether without flour during the coldest and darkest week of the year.

'Kitty,' he said, addressing his young wife, 'I must be off to the mill; there is scarcely any flour in the house, and, if I am not mistaken, we shall have snow soon. I should like to be at home when the snow comes.'

'Go to the mill!' echoed Kitty, in dismay. 'Why, John, have you forgotten that this is Christmas Eve? Oh, John, stay at home over Christmas; do, dear John!' Here the little woman held up Patty, that she might give her father a kiss.

But John, though very willing to embrace his bonny little blossom, could not consent to see his family snowed up in the log-cabin on a short allowance of flour; he therefore kept to his plan, and

started for the mill, with his bags of grain securely fastened to the back of Jenny, his stout old mare. Nor did he go unarmed, but carried his gun with him, for if he did not meet with any foe, he might at least bag a couple of squirrels or rabbits to help the family dinner.

'Good-bye, dear!' he called out to Kitty. 'Keep up your heart and don't be afraid. When it gets dark, fasten the door and windows, and expect me back again early to-morrow morning.'

Kitty made a mute gesture of farewell, and tried to smile through her tears; but it was with a sinking heart that she watched her husband ride away on that cold and cheerless morning. What if she should never more see him return to his home? What if any misfortune should—— But here Kitty braced herself up and went about her daily tasks, made the log-cabin bright and clean, baked a Christmas cake for John, and, when night came, milked the cow and locked her up in the little lean-to at the back of the house, lest the Cree Indians should take it into their heads to pay her a visit. These red men were neither warlike nor cruel, but they were impudent and thievish, and Kitty would be glad if they kept at a distance—at least, as long as John was absent from his home.

When gloomy night had settled down, and Kitty had securely fastened up her house, she took her sewing work, and sat down by her lamp. How long the time would seem till her husband's return! how quiet the tiny house! Little Patty was asleep, and as the mother bent over her tiny cot, she breathed a fervent prayer that God would protect her baby's father and bring him home to spend his Christmas Day with her.

But a strange restlessness had taken possession of her; she could no longer sit quietly and sew. She must get up and throw another log on the fire. But—— What sound was that? Kitty threw down her work and listened. A footstep, soft and stealthy, seemed to be lingering about the door—nay, two pair of creeping feet, she felt sure, were there. What could it be—Indians? But no—a scratching sound and a low growl gave notice that her midnight visitor was a four-footed one from the forest! This was a danger she had never dreamed of, and the heart of poor Kitty Clover died within her. She grew faint and weak with terror, though, by a great effort, she rallied again, while many bewildering thoughts surged through her brain. Oh! what should she do? how defend herself and her dear innocent little clover blossom from the terrible death that seemed to be hanging over them?

At this moment the scratching sound seemed to be transferred from the door of the log-hut to the roof overhead; and, suddenly glancing up the wide chimney, she saw with horror the fiery eyes of a huge panther, which was crouching, and just ready to spring down: the animal, however, being deterred from taking the leap by the smouldering embers of the fire below.

Suddenly remembering that all wild animals greatly dread the appearance of fire, Kitty snatched up some straw from the mattress of the bedstead, and emptied it upon the fire, which in a minute blazed up the chimney, accompanied by volumes of smoke, so that the panther, yelling with fear and rage, bounded off the roof, and slunk away into the forest.

But Kitty knew well that the savage creature would return, and she had no more straw to spare with which to keep it at bay. What should she do? Oh! could she but hear the trot of old Jenny, could she but see the burly form of her husband sitting behind his bags of flour, how happy would she be! But she must be up and doing, for again she heard the stealthy footsteps prowling round her door.

Casting her eyes about the room, she suddenly espied her husband's old musket hanging over the door. Hastily taking it down she loaded it, and, creeping into the chimney corner, she looked up, and almost fainted at the sight which met her eyes, for the panther had again climbed upon the roof, and the huge body was already descending. Kneeling down, her heart beating wildly with terror, she raised the gun to her shoulder, and, with a short prayer for help, she fired!

There was a loud scream of agony, a great bound, a mighty crash, and Kitty had just time to spring away from the fireside, when the panther fell down the chimney, and rolled over and over upon the floor in his death agony. Even then he was dangerous, for his great claws were tearing up the planking of the floor, as he struggled to reach poor Kitty, who had climbed upon the high bedstead to be out of his way, having first snatched up little Patty, whom she clasped to her bosom.

After a few minutes the roaring and growling ceased, the monstrous body quivered once or twice, then all was still. Poor Kitty, still almost overcome with terror, stepped down from her perch, cautiously crept over the floor till she reached the door, undid the fastenings, and rushed out into the chill morning air. She glanced around, for she felt herself surrounded by danger. The panther might have a mate: if it should appear upon the scene, then what could she do? Still, she could not remain in her house, with that terrible body on the floor. Where could she find a shelter for herself and poor little Patty, who was already crying bitterly with fear, hunger, and cold? Why, the cow-house, to be sure! It was a stout structure, well secured with bolts and bars. Once inside, her poor little one would be snug and warm while a draught of milk from the gentle creature would solace the crying and trembling child. But Kitty's fingers were stiff with cold, and it seemed as though she could never undo those bolts or open that massive door. But her attempt was at length successful, and the poor, terrified woman thankfully crept under the straw so plentifully supplied for the comfort of the cow, and, having fed her child, she had the pleasure of seeing little Patty fall into a tranquil sleep.

But the poor mother could not sleep; she lay wakeful and terrified, longing for the return of her husband.

Suddenly, for the second time during that long and dreadful night, she heard a sound; but this time it was not the stealthy step of a wild animal, but the rapid trot of old Jenny, as she neared her

"John Clover burst into the cow-house."

forest home. Yes! deliverance was near—her own John was at hand.

Our readers can easily imagine for themselves John Clover's horror as he arrived at his home and found the door wide open, the fire extinguished, and the dead body of a savage panther extended upon the floor. Where was his own Kitty, and where his little clover blossom? With a heart sick with fear he rushed to the back of the house, burst into the cow-house, and gathered his beloved ones into his arms.

TO-DAY.

THERE'S a time that was, but it is gone,
'Twill never more come our way;
The good that we left will never be done,
And we call that time 'Yesterday.'

There's a time that will be, but it is not yet,
It is vain to worry and sorrow;
The wise never go out to it with fret,
And we call that time 'To-morrow.'

There's a time that is—it alone is ours—
It is lying about our way;
Let us fill with beautiful deeds its hours,
The time that we call 'To-day.'

HOW JOSEPH SEVERN LIGHTED THE CANDLES.

WHEN John Keats, the poet, lay dying in Rome, the most faithful watcher at his bedside was his friend, Joseph Severn. During the hours of darkness, a solitary candle illuminated the room, and in case, overcome by weariness, he should drop asleep and allow this candle to burn out, Severn devised a plan by which it would light others automatically. To the base of the burning candle he tied a piece of thin twine, the other end of which he attached to the wick of a new candle some yards away. As the old end died out the expiring flame caught the twine, one flickering up it like a fairy star, set light to the second candle. A third or a fourth was added, and the invalid's eyes never looked in vain for the cheering light.

"One of the first things that met Paul's eye was the grinning face of the Eagle."

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 319.)

PAUL'S Colonel presently observed him looking doleful, and spoke kindly to him. Paul had lately been raised to the rank of lieutenant, chiefly on account of his gallantry during one of the sorties made by the Russians in the hope of repelling the Japanese, and Colonel Linbitsky had a liking for him.

'Have you bad news from home, Stirinof? he now inquired.

Paul explained the state of affairs. 'I would give all I possess to go to my poor mother,' he said. 'If

only one could remain loyal and yet desert, I would try to escape; but, of course, it is impossible.'

'Quite,' said the Colonel, smiling grimly. 'There are many here, I dare say, who would be glad to see their friends at home, if only the war would end.'

'I would gladly come back after I had seen her,' Paul murmured; but the Colonel only laughed.

Nevertheless, something came of the conversation. A few days afterwards Colonel Linbitsky spoke to Paul in the trenches: 'I put in a word for you to Stoessel yesterday,' he said.

He was gone before Paul could ask for an explanation. The explanation came, however, from the Commander-in-chief himself, who sent for Paul that very day.

'I think you speak English, lieutenant,' said Stoessel, 'fluently and with good accent?'

Paul flushed; what was coming? 'I *am* half English, sir; my mother——'

'Ah, your mother! And you speak so well that you can pass as an Englishman?'

'Certainly, Excellency.'

'Good! I wish to send a dispatch, to be wired from Chefoo to our Ambassador in London, and thence to the Tsar. The dispatch you shall learn by heart in English; there shall be nothing written; a junk is in readiness to sail this night. If you are caught, you are to describe yourself as an English correspondent escaping from Port Arthur. Take these papers; one is the appointment of one Carlton as correspondent of the *Dispatch;* the other a permit, signed by myself, allowing Mr. Carlton to reside in Port Arthur. Carlton has unfortunately been shot.'

Paul went to his quarters on winged feet.

'I shall get leave to come with you,' said the Eagle, upon hearing of the appointment; but upon reflection, Paul recommended him not to attempt it. 'You are too like me,' he said; 'there might be complications at Chefoo.'

But Mark was not to be denied. 'I could not stand this place without you,' he said; and he applied for permission to accompany his brother as valet, or in any capacity that the Commanding Officer could suggest; but the General laughed and refused.

'We shall have to part, old chap,' said Paul. 'But when the war is over we shall meet; meanwhile, if I can, after seeing about our dear mother, I shall return to Port Arthur; if I can't get leave or opportunity to do so, you may assume that I am safely at home in Russia, and that if the dear mother is still alive, she shall be fully prepared to recognise and accept you and love you as her very son Mark, recalled in truth from the grave.'

The Eagle did not say much—perhaps his heart was too full; for, be it remembered, he was about as deeply devoted to Paul by this time as ever was David to Jonathan.

So the brothers shook hands and parted, and Paul went off without a single written dispatch, but with the materials for a long and most important one in his memory. Half an hour later the junk started upon her perilous blockade-running venture, and one of the first things that met Paul's eye as he went into the little dimly-lit cabin below was the grinning face of the Eagle.

'You old rascal,' said Paul deeply moved and delighted, though somewhat disconcerted. 'You are a deserter—do you know that? I never supposed you would have the impudence to——'

'You might have known,' said the Eagle, 'that I wouldn't let you run the risk of the Jap shells without me! Why, you can't even swim a mile!'

'Well, I am uncommonly glad you're with me, old chap, and that is the plain truth,' Paul laughed, gripping his brother's hand. 'Now you are here I begin to feel we shall get through this business; I haven't felt very sanguine hitherto. You will have to make up as my servant, at Chefoo.'

'Get through? Of course we shall,' said the Eagle, laughing, for he was, in fact, very happy. 'You and I are not born to be drowned, or it would have happened nine months ago. I have had enough of this war; I want to go home and see my mother.'

The Eagle was by this time quite convinced of his relationship with Paul, neither had Paul any doubt upon the subject.

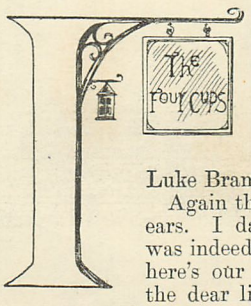
For the first hour or so of semi-dusk all went well. The junk had sailed in waning daylight, for the skipper was anxious to get as far as he could upon his way while the wind blew favourably and the daylight served. Afterwards he would be obliged to run the gauntlet of the watching Japanese fleet, but that would be after darkness fell.

(*Continued on page* 330.)

NOBODY'S DOG.

(*Continued from page* 319.)

CHAPTER XV.



I WAS running past the 'Hand-in-Glove,' when a familiar voice stopped me. Who was this standing at the open door of the inn, and looking like the master of the house? Surely not Luke Bramble!

Again the familiar voice fell on my ears. I darted to his side. Luke it was indeed, and he called out, 'Martha, here's our little Jim! Rosie, here's the dear little doggie come back, safe and sound!'

Well, I have no words to tell how happy I was. I did not waste any time in wondering how we all got to the 'Hand-in-Glove,' or why it all looked so clean and fresh, or where old Moody was gone, or whither the sickening smell had vanished. I was content to take all like a pleasant dream. They brought me food, and little Rosie fed me with her own fingers, and then I went to lie down in the sunshine on the front door-mat.

A ladder leaned against the door, on top of which Luke stood with a paint-pot. Presently, who should pass but Pat, whom I had left behind, trudging homewards.

'How do you like the new sign-board?' cried Luke to him, as he came up to the door. 'It was Martha's idea, and a good one for a temperance hotel.'

'"The Four Cups,"' read Pat, looking at Luke's painting on the board over the door.

'Tea, coffee, and cocoa always ready, you see,' said Luke.

'And the fourth cup?'

'Don't you see a trough down there by the gate? I put it up myself.'

'You will in nowise lose you reward,' said Pat, softly.

'We had all the rooms full, yesterday,' said Luke; 'and we look to do a roaring trade, especially in summer, when we shall have the little tables out among the roses in the garden. We shall be asking you, Pat, to give a tune now and then.'

'And right gladly I'll come and play my best,' said Pat, heartily. 'What a fine thing for the village Sir William has done! There will be fewer accidents down Break-neck Hill now, I take it.'

'A fine thing for me and Martha too,' said Luke. 'We shall make a tidy profit after paying him the rent. All I wish is that poor Frank was here, but we have heard nothing of him since I came out from the hospital. The old horses, Jon and Dave, took on sadly, and the brewer was forced to sell them, for they wouldn't work with the new carter. Sir William heard of it, and it ended in Sir William buying Jon and Dave, and making them a present to me. "A small return to you, Bramble," he said, "for having risked your life to save theirs. You deserve them, and in time, I am sure, they will show their gratitude by working well for you." So there they are, out in the stables at the back, eating their heads off, so to say, till Frank comes back, as Martha always feels sure he will do. But what's all this about General Eversley's son?'

'Ah! there's something else behind,' said Pat.

'Well, Martha did hear something about a discharged servant who had a grudge against young Rupert, and of his having raked up some old tale about a glove—said he would save Daddy Pinch the trouble, or something of the sort. I haven't time to listen to all the village gossip.'

'I happened to be leaving Crofton Court just as they brought him in,' said Pat, 'and turned back to hear what went on. Rupert Eversley's committed for trial on the charge of manslaughter. Sir William grieved for the father, but couldn't save the son. Too much was proved against him, and the poor old General himself refused to bail his son, saying that he was far better shut up, out of harm's way.'

There was a pause, then Pat said, 'Well, I wish you and your wife prosperity, Luke,' and went on.

Happily indeed the days passed now. The 'Four Cups' was a sweet, loving, quiet home: no quarrels, no loud angry words were heard within its walls—no drunken men staggered from its door to carry ruin and misery wherever they went. As Christmas-time drew near, that great birthday which all men keep, we grew busier and merrier still. Everybody had a kind word or a pat for me. It was about this time that I learned from one funny old dog, who visited the 'Four Cups' regularly every Saturday afternoon, how to sit up and beg for biscuits. Nobody teased or bothered me to do it; I just saw that by sitting up he got something nice, and I imitated him. But this was not all. Through watching this clever old dog, I learnt why men are so fond of money. They cannot eat it, but they can get things to eat instead of it. I learned how to pick up a penny when thrown to me, run to the bar with it, and get a biscuit instead. The guests at the 'Four Cups' had many a good laugh at this trick, and enjoyed it as much as I did. I looked on it purely as a matter of business, and when the house was full, I often had so many pennies to collect at once, that I learnt how to store them away in my cheeks, as if they had been a couple of purses. Very often Stubby would pay me a call, and as Luke and Martha liked the comical old dog, he never came in vain, but always partook of a snack in the back-kitchen.

(*Concluded on page* 333.)

ENCOUNTERS WITH EAGLES.

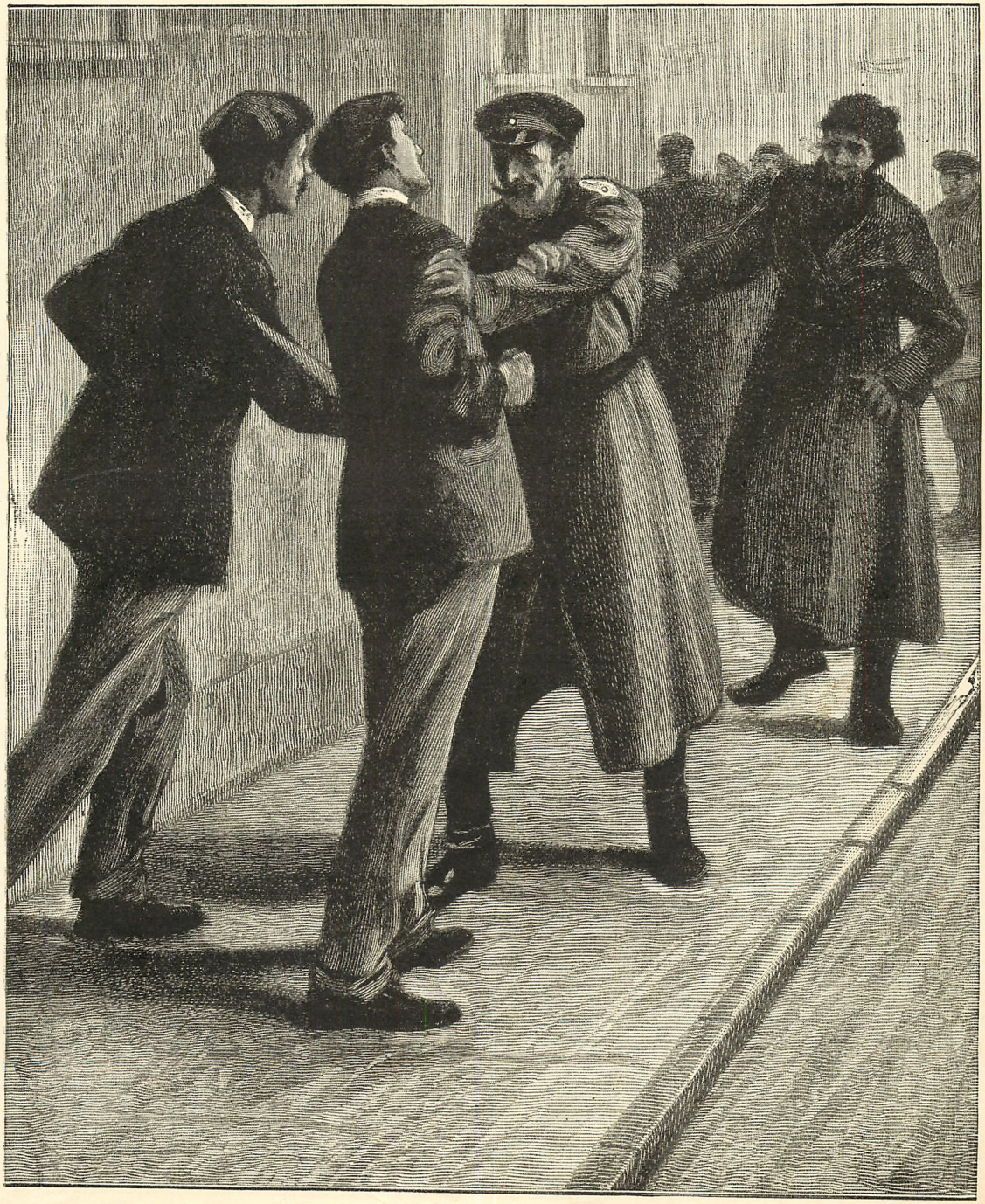
THE eagle is a most powerful bird, armed with sharp hooked beak and long pointed talons, with which it quickly dispatches the smaller birds and the rabbits, hares, and other field animals upon which it feeds. It bears its prey away whole to its eyrie, or nest, and the weight which it can carry through the air is truly surprising, when we remember that the bird itself is not very heavy. It has often been known to carry off young lambs and small deer, and there are many stories of young children being borne away to eagles' nests, though the truth of most of these tales is very doubtful. Children and even men have been attacked by eagles, and occasionally a child has been picked up and carried a little way by a very daring bird.

The eagle would be much more dangerous if it were as brave as it is strong and active; but its courage is not very great, except when it is exceedingly hungry, or when it is attacked. A traveller in America was once attracted to a monkey which he had heard screaming in the forest for nearly two hours. Upon reaching the spot whence the sounds came, he discovered the animal on a branch and an eagle perched near it. The eagle wished to attack the monkey, but dared not do so while the monkey faced him and screamed for help. The monkey was going the right way about saving his life, for careful observers say that there is little doubt that monkeys are able to protect themselves from eagles by keeping together in little groups.

An explorer once saw an eagle seize a young monkey, which held on to the branch where it sat and screamed for help. A number of other monkeys rushed to the rescue and began to pull out the eagle's feathers. This was more than the bird could bear, and he quickly relinquished his prey and made haste to get away from his tormentors.

Quite recently, a Swiss boy about fifteen years old was attacked by a large eagle, which flew at him savagely. The boy had an umbrella in his hand, and with this he defended himself bravely. Twice he beat the bird off, and as it came upon him a third time he managed to get out his pocket-knife and pierce the bird in the eye. This was the turning-point of the encounter. The bird flew away screaming with pain, and the brave lad, though wounded in his hand and face, remained the victor.

"The eagle flew at him savagely."



"Grozny would neither let go nor cease to shout."

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 326.)

CHAPTER XXXV.

DURING the evening the Chinese skipper pointed out two or three columns of smoke in the distance. 'Japanese,' he said. 'If they see us——' he made a realistic gesture to represent throat-cutting.

'All right,' said the Eagle, laughing, 'it will be dark long before they catch us; we shall dodge them in the darkness!'

But misfortune overtook that junk and all that were in it; for though the wind had blown steadily towards their destination at starting, it gradually died away, and during the small hours of the morning the little vessel was becalmed, and lay motionless upon a still sea.

To the disgust of all on board, the first objects made visible by the dawn were three Japanese torpedo-boats.

The captain wept; the crew followed suit. A boat was lowered from the nearest torpedo vessel.

'What are we to do, Eagle?' asked Paul; 'fight, or be taken away and hanged?'

'Fight!' said the Eagle; 'certainly that rather than hang!'

'Well, we shall see what they have to say when they come aboard.'

The Japanese arrived. They were seriously inclined. The blockade must be stringently enforced; examples were to be made. 'Possibly you will be shot,' they said.

'Then we shall fight,' said the Eagle, whereupon the young Japanese officer roared with laughter and pointed at the three torpedo-boats. 'Two men to fight a fleet?' he exclaimed. 'Come,' he added, 'the Admiral shall decide.'

So the twins were brought before a Japanese Admiral and were by him submitted to much questioning. The Admiral was anxious to know the number of troops in Port Arthur, the amount of provisions and ammunition, the length of time Stoessel could still hold the fortress.

Paul knew exactly all the officer desired to know, for he had this very information by heart, to wire to the Russian authorities; but not a word did the Japanese Admiral succeed in extracting from him.

'Would you prefer to be shot or to tell?' asked the officer, frowning.

'To be shot,' said Paul boldly, 'if shooting me would be consistent with Japanese ideas of honour.'

'Search him,' said the Admiral, 'and the other also!'

When Paul's bogus appointment as correspondent was produced by the searchers, he was asked why he had not stated his true position, when Paul laughed and replied that he had forgotten all about the documents. 'They are false,' he said; 'I am a Russian officer.'

'You are a brave one!' laughed the Admiral, looking with some curiosity at the prisoner.

His admiration for a brave man did not, however, prevent the brothers from being sent to Japan as prisoners of war. There was no question of shooting them; they were, on the contrary, most kindly treated, and but for the tedium of inaction and the pain of feeling that they had failed in their mission, and had, perhaps, lost their chance of seeing the Countess alive, the year which they passed as prisoners was not so bad an experience as might be supposed.

But the day of peace arrived at last, and Paul and the Eagle were among the first prisoners to be released. They took ship at the first opportunity and sailed for home—half dreading the day of their arrival, for they knew not whether their dear mother would be alive to welcome them home, and if she were not, Paul felt the bitterness of the home-coming would be far greater than the joy.

Trembling with apprehension they drove together to the Stirinof mansion. The blinds were down. Paul gripped Mark's arm: 'What does it mean?' he murmured.

The old porter opened the great front door. He recognised Paul instantly. 'It is the Count—it is my master!' he cried. '*Dorogoy Barin*' ('my dear Lord'), 'how we have longed for you.'

Paul stopped his garrulous old tongue with a gesture.

'The Countess—is she alive?' he asked, hoarsely. Then the brothers learned that their mother was alive and well, but she had gone to pass a few months in England in order to recover strength. She was living with her relations.

'We will rest two days,' said Paul, 'and then follow her to England.'

Those two days nearly proved fatal, however, to the liberty and happiness of our heroes; for it so happened that as they passed down the Nefsky on the day after their arrival, they suddenly met a man in uniform who uttered a cry as his eyes fell upon them, and seizing Paul by the arm, clung to it and began to shout and scream aloud after the manner of excited Russians.

'Good gracious! why, it's my old friend, Grozny,' said Paul. 'Let go, Grozny, or there will be trouble.'

But Grozny would neither let go nor cease to shout aloud, and a crowd collected. Among the crowd were two or three policemen.

'I denounce these men as political prisoners—convicts escaped from Siberia,' he yelled. 'Policemen, do your duty—arrest them both.'

'It is true, policemen,' said Paul; 'I escaped and volunteered for the war, and so did my brother. We have fought for Russia—which is more than this man has—and both of us have felt Japanese bullets.'

'That may be,' said a police-officer, bustling up; 'but if so it must be proved. You admit that you are escaped convicts—good; the matter must be inquired into.'

The crowd booed and made disparaging remarks about the police, who were very unpopular just then; but the inspector was firm, and—rather than cause a commotion in the public streets—the brothers consented to go quietly to the police court, greatly to the disgust of the spectators, who followed, booing and shouting, until dispersed by the police.

At the police office, during his interrogation by the chief officer, Paul, seeing that the matter was somewhat serious, conceived an excellent idea.

'We shall have no difficulty in obtaining the pardon of the Tsar,' he said, 'if for no other reason than that we saved the life of his Imperial Highness the Grand Duke Dmitri. May I communicate with him?'

The police officer knew and hated Grozny. Moreover, his sympathies were with the soldierly youths brought before him, and he was glad to grant Paul's request to be allowed to write to the Grand Duke Dmitri, who Paul declared would speak up for him.

The police inspector was, moreover, much impressed. 'The Grand Duke Dmitri!' he exclaimed. 'Are you then personally acquainted with his Imperial Highness?'

'Yes,' said Paul. 'May I write a note to him? My name is Count Paul Stirinof; my father was——'

The Chief of the Police Department was a second time impressed. 'Come back in an hour,' he said over his shoulder to Grozny; 'we shall then see whether it will be necessary to make a charge against Count Stirinof and his brother.'

Within an hour the Grand Duke Dmitri himself arrived upon the scene. He was not in the best of humours, for he had been disturbed in the midst of some occupation which amused him better than driving down to a police court to go bail for an acquaintance. But, to his credit be it said, he gave his guarantee that the Tsar himself would pardon the arrested persons upon his recommendation, and in virtue of this promise the prisoners were allowed, provisionally, to return to their home.

Later in the day the Grand Duke sent word to the police court that their pardon had been duly obtained.

'What if we had not picked up your Imperial Highness half-drowned, and set you on board our hencoop?' Paul asked with a laugh, after sincerely thanking the Grand Duke for his service.

Dmitri shrugged his shoulders. 'The State would have been the loser to the extent of one Grand Duke, and the gainer by two recaptured convicts,' he said, laughing also. 'And now are we quits for the hencoop?'

'We are still immensely in your debt, Highness,' replied Paul, and when Dmitri had departed, he added, laughing, to Mark, 'I sincerely hope that remark will not strike him as a doubtful compliment.'

'Why so?' asked the Eagle, whose brain was a slow-goer in comparison with that of Paul.

'Why, it occurred to me,' said Paul, 'that it might be taken as signifying, "We only saved one Grand Duke from drowning—a mere trifle!—while he preserved to their country two excellent fellows of the name of Stirinof, thereby rendering a service much more important than ours."'

The Eagle, who admired everything that Paul did or said, even his bad jokes, laughed heartily and averred that Paul Stirinof was undoubtedly worth a dozen Dmitri Romanofs.

(*Continued on page* 342.)

You will have to use a great many stones if you would throw one at every foolish dog that barks at you.—*Old Proverb.*

NOT TO BE BRIBED.

IN the reign of Charles II., Hull had for its Member of Parliament Andrew Marvell, the poet, a man of exceptional honesty and ability. The King had a high appreciation of Marvell's talents, and was anxious to obtain his help in Parliament against the people, whom he had hitherto served most faithfully. Unfortunately, the King had not so high an opinion of Marvell's honesty and patriotism as he had of his ability, and he thought it would be possible to win him to his side by the offer of a bribe. So he sent the Lord Treasurer, Danby, to Marvell's humble lodgings in the Strand to see what he could accomplish in the matter.

The Lord Treasurer groped up the narrow stairs leading to the apartments on the second floor where Marvell resided, and stumbled awkwardly into his room. He found the statesman at his desk, and, after apologising for disturbing him, told him that he had been sent by his Majesty, who had a high opinion of his character, and wished to appoint him to some important and well-paid office. Marvell knew quite well that the King could only make this offer to draw him aside from his duty to the people who had elected him, and therefore, while he returned his thanks to the King, he declined his offer. The minister, finding that this proposal was of no avail, told him that the King had given orders for a thousand guineas to be paid to him as a mark of the appreciation in which his royal master held him. Marvell declined this too, as he had declined the first offer, remarking at the same time that he had no need of such a gift, as his mode of living was quite good enough for his modest desires. In proof of this he called up his servant, and said to him, 'What had I for dinner yesterday?'

'A shoulder of mutton, sir,' was the answer.

'And what shall I have to-day?' asked Marvell.

'Some of the remainder hashed,' replied the servant.

Marvell allowed the servant to withdraw, and then, turning to the Lord Treasurer, said, 'To-morrow, my Lord, I shall have the blade-bone broiled.'

The Lord Treasurer had sense enough to see that a man so frugal, so outspoken, and so honest was not to be won by bribes, and he returned to tell the King what he had seen and heard. As for Marvell, though he never attained to wealth or to a title, he remained faithful to his duty to the last, and he left a name which has ever since been honoured as that of a patriot, who valued his character more than all the riches which could be offered him.

DETERMINATION.

DURING an engagement some of Wellington's officers said of a certain fort, 'It is impregnable. It cannot be taken!'

'Cannot!' replied the Iron Duke. 'It must be taken. It is in my order-book.'

The Duke had ordered it to be taken, and taken it was.

Remember that 'cannot' must not simply mean 'cannot without an effort'—that the effort which is essential to success must be made.

DOORS, LOCKS, AND KEYS.

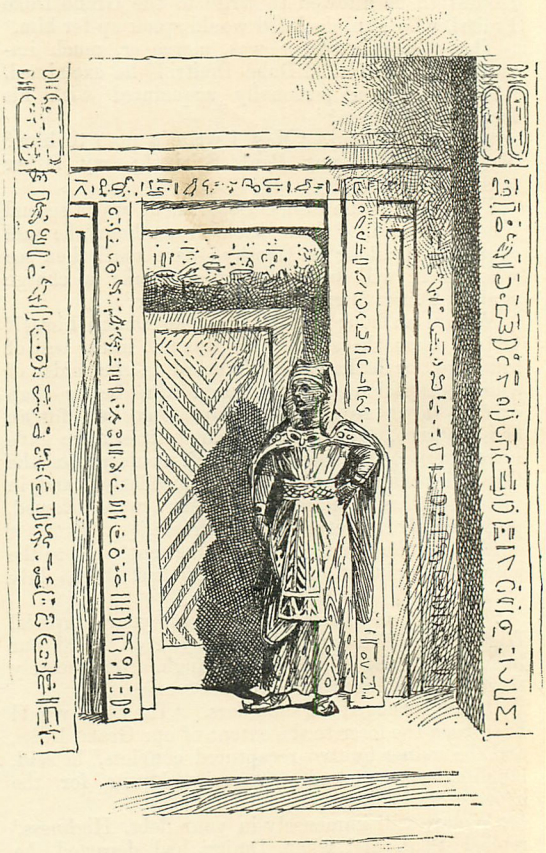
IV.—EASTERN DOORS.

THOUSAND years ago an Anglo-Saxon poet wrote of the door as the mouth of the mansion, and an Italian architect has also declared the proper place of a door to be the centre of a building, because the mouth is in the middle of the face. All over the world doorways consist of four parts: the sill on which the door rests, the jambs or posts on which it swings, the cross-beam above, called the lintel, and the actual door, whether of wood, stone, or metal.

Folklore is rich in traditions connected with the sill, or threshold. Mohammedans think it very unlucky to tread on it, and in mosques a wooden bar obliges all entering to stride across it without touching it. In Normandy a superstition is still common that unless a cock is killed, and its blood sprinkled on the threshold of a new house, the first occupier will certainly die within the year. The jambs have even more dreadful associations in certain parts of the world. In the kingdom of Siam, until the reign of the present enlightened ruler, whenever a new city gate was to be erected, officials had a custom of lying in ambush near the site, to waylay the passers-by, of whom they selected four or eight, according to circumstances. These luckless wretches were supposed to be honoured by being allowed to serve as foundations for the gate-posts, with the idea that they might hereafter be guardian angels to the new structure. The same idea of sacrifice used to be found in Japan; a seventeenth-century writer mentions that a wall laid on a human body is sure to be safe. The condition is, however, that the victim must be willing, and some wretched slave was often persuaded to offer himself for immolation beneath the great stone foundation. The Dyaks of Borneo had formerly a fashion of thrusting a slave-girl into a deep hole beneath the suspended centre-post of a new building. The lashings were then cut, the huge block fell on the victim, and the house, having propitiated the gods of the earth with human blood, was supposed to be sure of their protection.

It is curious how fashion rules the world, even in the seemingly trivial matter of opening doors. The Greeks invariably opened the street-door outwards, and, even when the inconvenience to passers-by was fully comprehended, it appeared more simple to them to pass a law than to change the custom. The statute ordained that outgoers should rap loudly on the inside of the door before opening, that passing citizens might take warning and get out of the way. The Romans, with their usual common sense, opened the doors inwards, although they seem to have shared the Greek idea that the outward opening was more honourable, for certain persons entitled to especial compliment had the privilege granted to them of opening their door to the outside. The Egyptians seem to have had no such tradition, and many of their doors opened as is the custom now with all civilised nations.

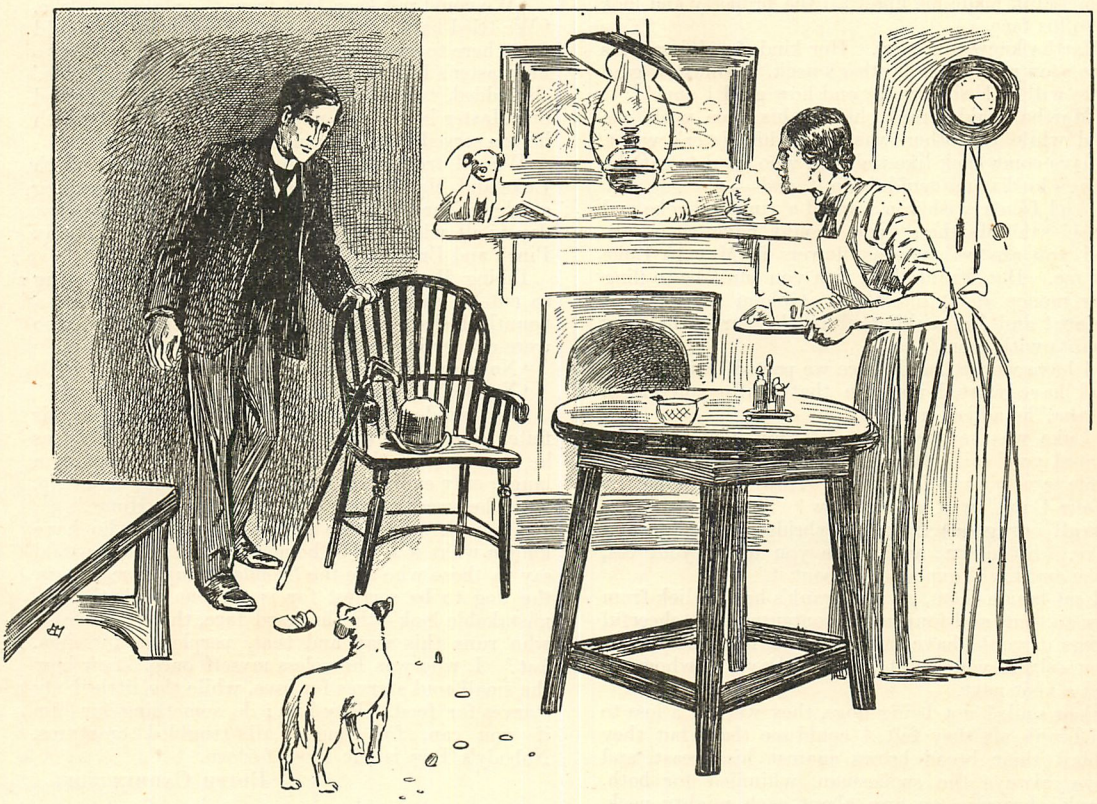
A common form of Egyptian door was of simple construction; it was almost always nearly flat with the actual entrance, unlike the deep mouldings and pillars of Gothic doorways. The doorheads were square, richly painted in set patterns, and often of great height. On the top a sign and a lucky sentence were usually inscribed, and it is supposed that the



Egyptian Door.

Jewish custom of having a sign on the doorpost was learnt during their sojourn in Egypt. Most of the doors, both of houses and temples, were made of wood, and this being a very rare commodity in Egypt, cedar was largely brought from Lebanon for the purpose, the native woods of acacia and date-palm being used for beams and common woodwork. Probably mouldings and projecting ornament were not used, because the sun of Egypt is so brilliant that everything looks flat, and the effect of shadow, so important to European architecture, was of little avail. Masses of brilliant colour were used on walls and gateways, according to the artist's maxim, 'The more light, the more colour.'

Another doorway of very ancient construction had a cylinder near the top, moved by huge screws, to draw up and down a curtain of matting or material



"A call from Frank made me look up to his face."

to serve as a door. These doorways are of immense antiquity, and could have afforded little protection excepting from the sun and the flies, two of the most trying of Egyptian enemies. There are very fine models of such doors in the British Museum. One, made of solid stone, was not intended to open; it was the door of a tomb, and was fashioned solid because the spirits of the dead, though they were supposed to want a doorway, were able to pass through without opening it.

NOBODY'S DOG.

(*Concluded from page* 327.)

ONE day Stubby came in, looking very important, and bustled up to me. 'I've got some news,' he said; 'not a dog knows it but me. Frank has come back. He is dressed in different clothes from those in which he went away. A man, or even a woman, might not know him, such is the stupidity of their noses, but a dog can't be mistaken. I sniffed at his boots, and I am certain. I don't believe anybody knows what Frank did, after Luke was carried away that day, but me. He came back down the hill and picked up that red handkerchief of Luke's and hid his face in it and cried; then he got up and knelt upon the grass, and said aloud, looking upwards, "I will never drink again. May God help me to keep this promise." Mark my words, you'll see Frank before long.' Here Stubby's nostrils began to tremble. 'I smell something very nice in the kitchen,' he remarked. 'I think I'll step round.'

So he left me alone. I lay thinking of his words and of Frank; then I heard a voice in the garden asking of Luke, who stood there, whether Martha Bramble was at home.

'My wife?' said Luke, 'yes. Come in.'

Something in the voice seemed to touch me, though Luke did not recognise it. I ran out to meet the new-comer and to sniff at his boots, as Stubby had done. Meanwhile the stranger said, in an unsteady tone, 'A cup of tea, please,' and, as Luke withdrew to fetch it, he drew out a purse and began to fumble nervously at the clasp, saying, under his breath, 'He doesn't know me.'

Martha soon came in with a fragrant cup. Down went the purse! It flew open, and out danced all the money and trickled over the clean boarded floor. Now I saw my chance; what a harvest of biscuits might I not reap! I ran about, chasing the rolling coins, and, packing them hastily into my cheek, was hurrying to the bar to spend my money, when a call

from Frank made me upset all the property and look up to his face.

Martha knew him now. Her kind, forgiving arms were soon round her brother's neck. 'Oh, how glad Luke will be!' she cried, 'and how glad I am!'

'Martha,' said Frank, hiding his face with one hand while the other was round his sister's waist, 'I have come back like the man who tried to eat the swine's husks and couldn't do it, and——'

'And I only wish you wanted a ring and robe and shoes,' said Martha; 'you should have them all. And you are welcome as flowers in May to Luke and me. But, Frank, how rich you must be to fling your money about like that! Golden sovereigns, I declare! and Jim making off to the bar to buy my biscuits with them.'

'I have worked hard since we parted,' said Frank, 'and have wasted none on that stuff—you know, Martha,' he added, humbly.

'Luke was saying only yesterday how much he wanted you,' said Martha. 'The very horses in the stable are pining for you. How splendidly the "Four Cups" will get on now! And you can cart out all our goods from Ferrybridge, with Jon and Dave. Sit down, and while you drink your tea, Luke and I will explain all about it.'

I sat beside them, giving Frank's hand a lick from time to time, and four more contented and cheerful beings it would have been hard to find that afternoon—six if you count Jon and Dave, to whom we paid a visit next.

Poor souls! not being dogs, they were at a loss to tell Frank all they felt, I could see that; but they rubbed their broad brows against his breast, and Dave, always the spokesman, whinnied for both. Frank, throwing an arm about each mighty neck, repeated the words that he had spoken once before into the blue sky.

'We'll have a jolly Christmas now, sure enough,' said Frank, with a chuckle, 'with the finest Christmas-tree, with a present on it for everybody—little Jim and all. There shall not be one sad or lonely soul in the village if I can help it—no, not even a hungry dog.'

Clear and bright dawned the Great Birthday, gay with ringing of bells, gleaming of holly berries and green leaves, shining of children's joyful faces, and brilliant without with glittering sun and sparkling frost diamonds. Stubby and I waited impatiently enough for all the people to stream out of church; but why did so many pause on the further side, where the little, narrow path led among the graves? Stubby and I could bear it no longer; we joined the group which had gathered round a certain green mound glittering with hoar-frost. What was that lying on it? A wreath of snow?—No! To those who looked closely, it took the form of a once living creature, now lying dead, wrapped in calmest sleep.

Presently, with her soft, warm, ungloved hand, a child tenderly caressed the white head with its drooping, golden ears, and a child's voice said, 'Oh, dear Goldie! oh, poor, dear Goldie!'

They led her away, and soon nobody stood there but the old sexton and a lady dressed in black, whose tears ran freely down.

'We could not keep him from the place,' said she. 'We tried hard, but, unless we shut him up, he would come here to mourn. He must be buried as near to his master's feet as they will let him lie, and I wish,' she added, 'oh, how I wish, that any of us served our Master in Heaven with half the zeal with which he has served an earthly master.'

We all trooped home to the great feast which Luke and Martha had provided as a house-warming at the 'Four Cups,' which was an open house that day to all who chose to come, including old Daddy Pinch and Bristles.

Piping Pat was late, in consequence of lingering to cut up carrots for Jenny's dessert. Of these a bountiful share was carried to Jon and Dave, who were conversing as follows:—

'No more Saturday nights now, Dave.'

'No, Jon, they're all turned into good days now.'

The wandering minstrel had not forgotten his flute. He would make the company laugh or cry, as he pleased. On this occasion he chose to make them laugh, only ending, before the happy party broke up, with the sweet melody of 'Home, Sweet Home.'

Ah, it is sweet, the sweeter to those who have known what it is to be homeless; and what I would say to those who are the friends of my race is this, the dog to be sorriest for is the one with the unmistakable look—the haggard face, the wild eyes—who runs this way and that, perplexed, forsaken, *lost!* I, who was homeless myself once, know how the small soul starves for love, while the little body starves for food. Pity him; do something for him if you can, for among all troubled creatures, Nobody's Dog is the most forlorn.

EDITH CARRINGTON.

SPONGES.

A PIECE of sponge is a very strange thing. It is not quite like either wood, horn, paper, indiarubber, or any other substance. We know, perhaps, that sponges are brought from the bottom of the sea by divers, and we may even have been told that they grow there. If they grow, sponges are either animal or vegetable substances; but if we were asked to decide which of these they were, we should probably be quite unable to do so.

Sponges certainly do grow. Those which we use in our baths are obtained from the eastern parts of the Mediterranean Sea or from the West Indies. The Greeks and the Syrians are the races who undertake the dangerous work of gathering sponges in the Mediterranean. The Syrian diver, taking hold of a stone attached to a rope, in order to sink himself, drops over the side of a boat into deep water. Down he goes, perhaps fifty or sixty feet, until he reaches the bottom, where he finds the sponges growing on the rocks around him, like little shrubs or bushes. He tears off as many as he can while he holds his breath, and places them in a net or bag at his waist. When he feels that he can no longer hold out, he gives a signal to those in the boat above, and they haul him up with his bag full of sponges.

The sponges which the Syrian diver brings up are

not quite like the sponges we use. They are slimy, heavy, and dirty, and smell of shell-fish. They are of a bluish-black colour above, and a dirty white on the under-side. Very few holes are to be seen in them; they are loaded with a kind of milky jelly.

Before the sponges are ready for use, they have to undergo long preparation. The first step is to squeeze out of them the milky jelly. If this is left in for a short time, it begins to decay. The sponges are afterwards dried in the sun, and treated in other ways which are kept secret as much as possible by the sponge-divers. When thoroughly dried and cleaned, they are ready for sale to the English and other merchants who buy them up.

All this may be very interesting, but it does not tell us what the sponge is, or whether it is an animal or a plant. In order to discover that, men have had to study little living sponges, which they have kept in glasses or tanks. Little by little, one observing one thing, and another something else, these men have made out the truth, and shown us clearly what the sponge is.

If by chance some little specks of colouring matter fall near a living sponge in an aquarium, it is soon evident that the sponge is alive and at work. The colouring matter shows that the water around the sponge is rushing to and fro in currents and eddies. From the large holes of the sponge streams of water are continually pouring out; and, as we have no reason to suppose that the sponge manufactures water, as much water must go into the sponge as comes out; otherwise the out-flowing would quickly cease. Careful watching shows that the water enters by the small holes of the sponge, many of which are scarcely larger than a pin's head, and, after passing through the channels in the inside of the sponge, comes out again in large streams from the wide openings, which are much less numerous than the small ones.

When pieces of living sponge are examined under a microscope, it is seen that the milky jelly, which the diver squeezes out, is the living part of the sponge. The mass of jelly in a sponge is not one living being, the whole of which suffers if any part of it is injured, but it is a large collection of small living particles, each of which lives its own life simply by the side of its neighbours. Each of these particles is little more than a bag of jelly, packed with its companions, like so many tiny living bricks, along the sides of the channels which run through the sponge. Yet each of them is able to take out of the water, as the current passes along, sufficient food to keep it alive. Each, too, is at work making its share of the sponge upon which it rests.

At certain places the channels running through the sponge are widened out in a kind of bubble-like hollow. This hollow is lined with little living patches of jelly, like the rest of the channel; but these patches are of a slightly different shape from those in other parts. Each of them has at its end a long slender thread, which flicks out into the current of water in the channel. This thread has the power of moving to and fro, of rising erect and bending again, like a stalk of corn swaying with the wind. A number of them are like a cornfield waving in a breeze, with this difference, however, that the threads of the sponge-jelly are moving by their own power. As they bend always in one direction, they sweep the water along before them, as if it were beaten by so many little oars; and it is this movement which causes the currents which pass in and out of the sponge.

From what has been said, it is plain that the living sponge is a collection of tiny creatures working together—co-operating, as we sometimes say—to obtain food for themselves, and to build up a kind of horny or leathery skeleton, which holds them together. This skeleton, when the living matter is washed out of it, is the sponge which we use in our bathrooms. It has been found, too, that young sponges grow from a kind of egg, and this proves that the sponge is a collection of animals, and not a collection of plants. W. A. Atkinson.

WORDS.

WHERE are lovely words that I may use,
And words of scorn and spite;
Words that are dark and cruel,
And noble words and right.
There are words that make the timid strong,
And make the coward brave,
And there are ugly words and wrong—
Words to destroy and save.

There are words as sweet as lovely flowers
That blossom in the spring;
And there are words that grow like ugly weeds,
Destroying each fair thing.
Oh, may I speak all lovely words,
That so my lips may be
Two gates to keep the dark words back,
And set the sweet words free.

OBLIGING.

HAVING purchased two pictures of a Parisian artist, King A—— of X—— honoured the painter by a visit at a studio situated, among many others, on the fourth floor of an old house in the Latin Quarter.

'Fourth floor back, young man,' directed the hall-porter, ignorant of the identity of the Royal visitor.

The King prepared to ascend, when the man again popped his head out of his little office.

'Look here, young man! Do me a favour. Just carry up this washing to your friend!'

Much amused, the young King carried the artist his bag of clean linen.

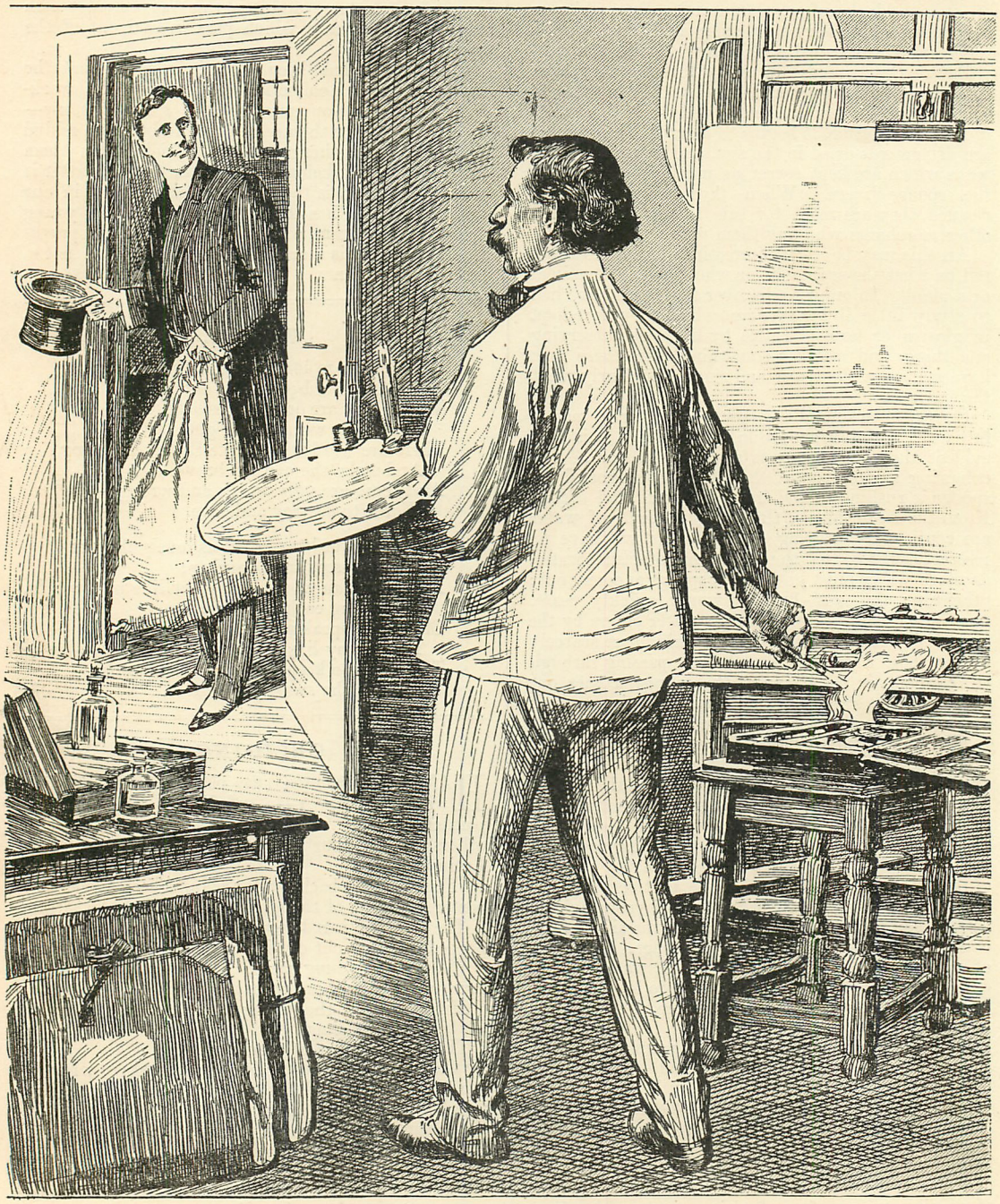
The artist was greatly embarrassed.

'Oh, your Majesty!' he stammered; 'what a terrible mistake! Why did you not reprove the porter? Why did you bring the bag up?'

'Because he asked me to,' said the King with a laugh.

'But——'

'Oh, nonsense!' interrupted the King. 'Don't say any more about it. Every one ought to be obliging; and, whoever one may happen to be, it would be very disobliging to refuse a favour to a fellow-creature, when one could so easily save him a journey up four flights of stairs!'



"'Oh, your Majesty, why did you bring the bag up?'"

"'Little boy, you are a gentleman!' cried Aunt Beryl."

ACTIONS TELL.

WITH muddy clothes, torn and faded shirt, no collar, an old red handkerchief twisted round his neck, and a battered straw hat fit only for a scarecrow, Billy Jenks was working in a ditch.

'What a terrible little ragamuffin!' said Aunt Beryl to Gladys as they approached Billy's master's farm.

Billy saw them coming. In a moment the old hat was pulled off, and his muddy, bare feet ran swiftly to open the gate leading to Manor Farm.

'Little boy, you are a gentleman!' cried Aunt Beryl.

It is the way we behave, and not our work or the clothes we wear, which stamps us as gentlemen or boors.

THE LEGEND OF THE WILLOW-PATTERN PLATE.

MOST readers of *Chatterbox* have seen a piece of beautiful old blue 'willow-pattern' china at one time or another. This is the story of the picture which is always to be found on the genuine plates.

Once upon a time there was a rich old Mandarin who had an only daughter named Li-Chi. She and her father lived in a beautiful house, two stories in height—a rare thing in China.

Li-Chi was a very pretty girl, and, as her father was a rich man, she was always dressed in the most beautiful silks money could buy, and had you seen her in her favourite peach-coloured silk, falling in soft folds about her feet, you would have thought her wor hy to marry a prince.

But Li-Chi did not want to marry a prince, for she loved Chang, her father's secretary, who lived in the island cottage you see at the top of a willow-pattern plate. Of course the Mandarin was very angry about this, for he had betrothed his daughter to a Ta-jin, who was rich and rather old.

Li-Chi had never seen the Ta-jin, but her father came to her one evening as she was sitting on the balcony overlooking the river, and told her he had made arrangements for her marriage.

'Oh, no! no!' sobbed Li-Chi. 'I love Chang, and cannot marry any one else.'

'You shall never marry Chang,' replied the Mandarin sternly. 'I have promised that you shall marry the Ta-jin when the peach-tree blossoms.'

The willow-tree was in blossom then, for it was early in the year, and the peach would not bloom until the spring. Every day after this Li-Chi watched the buds of the peach-tree unfolding, and wondered whether Chang had forgotten her. At last one evening he sent her a message, while she was sitting on her balcony, by a little boat made out of half a cocoa-nut shell, and fitted with a tiny sail, which floated right to her feet. Inside she found a coloured bead she had given her lover (a proof that the boat came from Chang), and a message written on a piece of rice-paper.

Li-Chi took her ivory tablets from the bosom of her dress and replied, putting them in the boat, and, leaning over the balcony, she watched it sail away with her letter.

'He will come for me before my wedding-day,' she sighed softly to herself.

Chang, on the farther bank of the river, waited to draw his little toy to land; and when he read the message he smiled, and walked back to the gardener's cottage and asked the man if he knew when the Ta-jin was coming.

'The betrothal feast is fixed for next Thursday, and the Mandarin has ordered his gardener to take six dozen carp out of the fish-ponds, and there are to be golden pheasants on the table, and a boar's head and roast peacock,' replied the old man, 'and the servants say the Ta-jin is bringing his bride a casket of jewels.'

'Could you borrow me one of the servants' dresses and smuggle me into the banqueting-room?' asked Chang.

'That is impossible,' replied the gardener, shaking his head, for he was afraid to risk the displeasure of such a rich man as Li-Chi's father.

At last the festal day arrived. Every one was happy and busy except Li-Chi, who sat on the balcony looking wistfully across the river. At length her eyes rested on the peach-tree, covered with blossoms, while the willow hung drooping and faded. This made her so sad that she went into her room and sat on a couch, watching her attendants as they spread out on the floor the lovely silks the Ta-jin had sent her. Tiring of their talk, she sent them away; but one of them returned, saying that a servant wished to speak to her.

'Let him come in, said Li-Chi impatiently.

The young man who entered wore a long blue cotton robe and a broad straw hat, which concealed his face, but as soon as they were alone he took it off and made her a low bow, and Li-Chi saw it was Chang himself.

'How did you get here?' she asked, sobbing for joy.

'I disguised myself as a beggar,' said Chang, showing her the rags he wore under his blue robe, 'and asked for alms, but every one was too busy to listen to me; so, seeing one of the servants' dresses behind a screen, I slipped it on, and made my way to your room. But how can I disguise you, Li-Chi? We must pass through the banqueting-room into the garden and across the bridge to the gardener's cottage.'

Li-Chi looked round the room and found a dress belonging to her old nurse which covered her bridal finery all over, except her pretty little gold-embroidered shoes. 'Never mind my shoes,' she said; 'I shall run so fast no one will see them.'

She took her distaff in her hand, because she did not want to be a useless wife to Chang, and gave him the box of jewels to carry. 'If my father should see us!' she whispered, holding her lover's hand very tightly.

'Don't be afraid,' said Chang. 'I have prayed the good Genies not to let him catch us. If he comes near to us they will change us into two stars, or perhaps two turtle-doves.'

They reached the garden unobserved, and Chang led his sweetheart towards the bridge, but the pretty little shoes would not allow her to run very fast, and when they got to the foot of the bridge, the

Mandarin came rushing down the garden-path with a whip in his hand.

'Stop! stop!' he roared. 'Will no one stop the thief who has stolen my daughter?'

Chang put Li-Chi in front of him, and she ran across the bridge first, while he followed behind her, carrying the casket of jewels. Behind them both came the Mandarin, brandishing his whip. But the good Genies, who were watching the lovers, saw that the Mandarin gained quickly on Chang, and that there was no chance of his escaping; so they said to each other, 'Let us change them into two turtle-doves, that they may be happy together after all.'

Just as the Mandarin, therefore, put out his hand to seize the young man by the shoulders, the box of jewels and the distaff fell, splash! into the water, and Chang and Li-Chi were changed into two turtle-doves. They at once flew away out of the Mandarin's reach, and he was left with his whip in his hand—alone.

When you come across a willow-pattern plate, you must look for them hovering in the air above the bridge. On the bridge you will see three figures: Li-Chi, with her distaff; Chang, with the casket of jewels; and the Mandarin with the whip. At one end is the famous willow-tree, at the other the gardener's cottage, and at the top of the plate an island with another cottage on it, in which Chang had hoped to live with Li-Chi. But instead of that they built a cosy nest in the garden, from which they could watch the peach-tree bloom and the willow fade without fear of being parted.

TIGER AND CROCODILE.

AN old magazine tells a true tale, which might be called a tiger-and-crocodile story. A jheel in India, as the author explains, is a ravine between two hills, very dry in winter, and full during the monsoons. In one of these ravines, close to a small river which had overflowed its banks, a native went to bathe. He was in the water up to his neck, when a tiger on the top of the hill above set out to stalk him, and finally gave a leap towards its prey.

But the tiger was no mathematician, and he had not calculated that, since his victim was much lower than himself, a leap of the right strength for a horizontal range would carry him far beyond his mark; and so he fell some feet on the far side of the bather.

Now it happened that a hungry crocodile was at the same time swimming under water towards the native. When the crocodile had almost come upon his prey, he heard a splash just in front, and thinking this might be a final gambol of the bather, he made a dash, and brought his enormous jaws down upon the tiger's paw!

The bather nearly fainted with fright when he saw the tiger fall on the water, and for a few moments he could not understand why the creature did not devour him. Why did he persist in keeping one of his paws under water, beating savagely with the other, and uttering horrible growls? Most mysterious of all, the water began to turn red!

All at once, as the assaults of the tiger became more furious, and his growls developed into roars, the huge tail of a crocodile reared up out of the water. Then the bather fled up the hill, and having climbed a tree, he sat there to watch the end of the battle.

The obvious intention of the crocodile was to pull the tiger under water and drown him, and the tiger, understanding this purpose, tried to frustrate it by beating the snout of the crocodile with his other paw. But the snout was too far down, and he spent much of his force on the surface of the water. His struggles became more and more feeble, and at length he disappeared altogether, only some bubbles remaining to show where he had been.

SOME OF NATURE'S MARVELS.

VII.—ABOUT EGGS OF INSECTS.

ANY mention of eggs naturally calls to mind the familiar form of the hen's egg, which we usually take as the standard by which to compare all kinds of eggs. As soon as we begin this comparison, we begin to see differences even in the eggs of other birds. For instance, the eggs of plovers, hawks, guillemots, and crows all differ from those of the hen in colour; while, as to shape, we find that the eggs of the plover and guillemot are 'pear-shaped,' those of the guillemot remarkably so. This is of great advantage, because no nest is built by these birds, so that the egg rests upon the bare rock, generally a narrow ledge on some steep cliff overhanging the sea. When the wind blows, or when the parent accidentally gives it a kick, the importance of this shape becomes apparent, for, instead of rolling off into the sea, it just turns slowly round and stops. The eggs of the grebes have the ends almost pointed, while those of some owls are almost as rounded as a ball.

When we have noticed the fact that birds' eggs differ slightly in shape, and more or less in colour, we have said all that is to be said from this point of view. But besides birds, crocodiles and many of the tortoise tribe lay large, hard-shelled eggs, very like a hen's egg, and so also do some species of snails. When, however, we come to the frog tribe and fishes, we find greater variety. Among the frogs and toads, for instance, the egg has no hard outer shell, but only a jelly-like transparent outer coat; while, as to number, they may run from a very few to thousands. They may be laid separately, or attached to one another in great masses, but their surfaces are never brightly coloured. But even among the frog tribe the eggs are always alike in one particular—their roundness. With the fishes even this common likeness is wanting, and the most wonderful of these departures from what we may call the typical egg are those of the sharks and skates.

Skates' eggs many of my readers must have met with on the sea-shore during their summer holidays. Turn to fig. 1, and you will probably recognise them at once as the black, horny, flattened cases, oblong in shape, and with each corner drawn out into what looks like a long handle; they are often

called fairy purses, or 'pisky purses.' The eggs of the dog-fish, shown in fig. 2, a small cousin of the shark, are longer than those of the skate, and have the corners drawn out into long twisted tendrils. Still more remarkable are the eggs of a much rarer fish known as the Port Jackson shark. Here the pear-shaped egg is encircled by a spiral ribbon, set on edge, as it were (fig. 3). Among the lampreys we find the eggs somewhat resembling long acorns, and provided with hooks at each end, whereby several eggs are made to cling together. Other fishes, like the herring and the cod, lay eggs more like those of the frog tribe, for they have an outer coat of clear, jelly-like matter, and are perfectly round. But while the herring lays but a few thousand eggs at a time, the cod-fish lays millions. And for this difference there is a curious explanation. The herring's eggs are sticky, and attached to the bottom of the sea, or to objects lying there; but the cod-fish eggs, on the contrary, float at the surface, where they are exposed to so many more dangers than those of the herring that, unless millions of eggs were laid, cod-fish would soon become extinct.

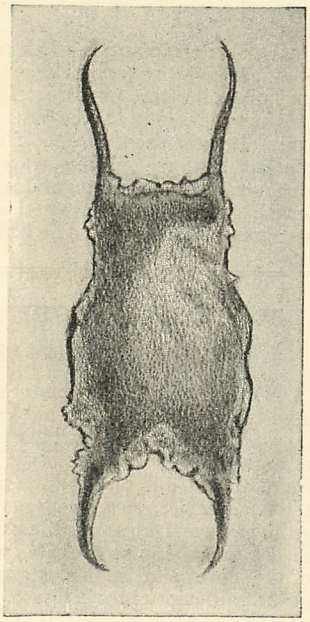


Fig. 1.—Skate's Egg.

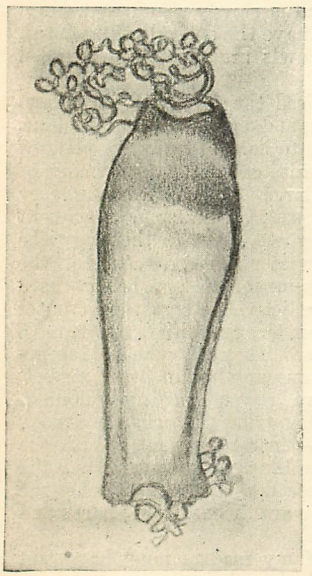


Fig. 2.—Dog-fish's Egg.

If, now, we pass with a jump to the eggs of insects, we shall find that in the matter of shape they grow, as Alice said, 'curiouser and curiouser.' To begin with, we need a microscope to see them—at least, to see them properly; and, by the aid of this instrument, we find that in their shape, and the sculptured markings of their surface, they are really objects of the most surpassing beauty. The egg of the butterfly, for instance, is, when only slightly magnified, a really beautiful object. But some of the insects follow what is generally said to be a very unwise plan: they put all their eggs into one basket—that is to say, they enclose them in a coil known as a cocoon, and this is often of rare beauty. The most striking proofs of this are to be found in the curious egg-cases of the stick-insects, as a glance at figs. 4 and 5 will show. Even the much-hated 'blackbeetle' or cockroach, which is neither a beetle nor really black, is not without interest in this

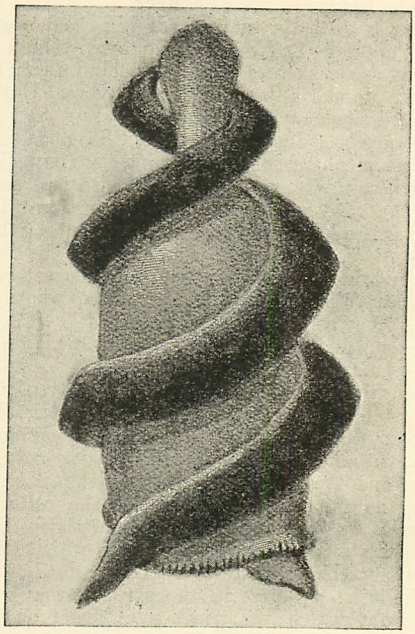


Fig. 3.—Egg of Port Jackson Shark.

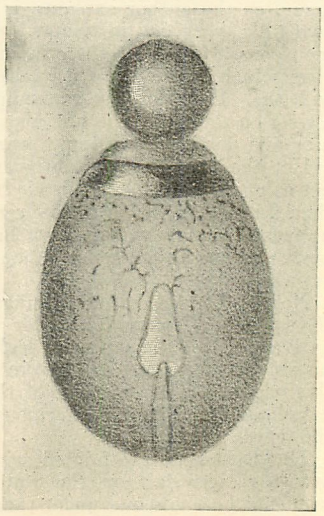


Fig. 4.—Stick-insect's Egg.

matter, since it encloses its eggs in a sort of portmanteau.

The common shellfish, known as the whelk, lays very remarkable eggs; an immense number are laid, enclosed in little purse-like structures, hundreds of which are bound together to form ball-like masses, each of which contains many eggs. All my readers must have met with such clusters, and will recognise them in fig. 6; but few probably have any suspicion of the grim tragedy that goes on within the little purse. Briefly, when the eggs hatch, the young whelks, imprisoned within the walls of their tiny nursery, begin a most unbrotherly warfare, a few of the stronger preying upon the weaker, till at last but one is left—he has eaten all the rest!

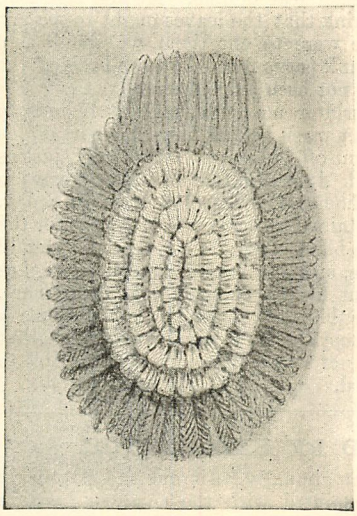


Fig. 5.—Stick-insect's Egg.

Another of the great molluscan tribe, the common

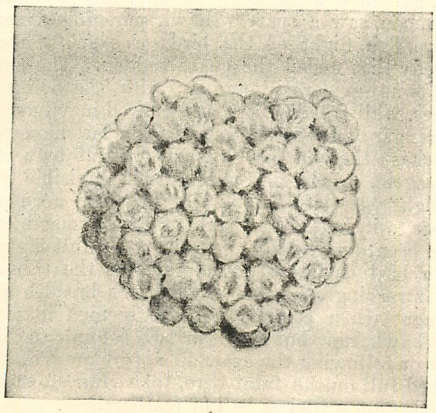


Fig. 6.—Whelk's Eggs.

cuttlefish, lays dozens of eggs, each encased in a black, horny coat, and fastened, like a bunch of grapes, to seaweed and other objects, as you may see in fig. 7.

The hard shell composed of lime which encloses the egg of the fowl is only met with in the case of birds, some reptiles, and some snails. In frogs and many fishes the eggs have a jelly-like outer coat in place of a shell, and the egg is round, while in other fishes the egg is of various shapes, and enclosed within

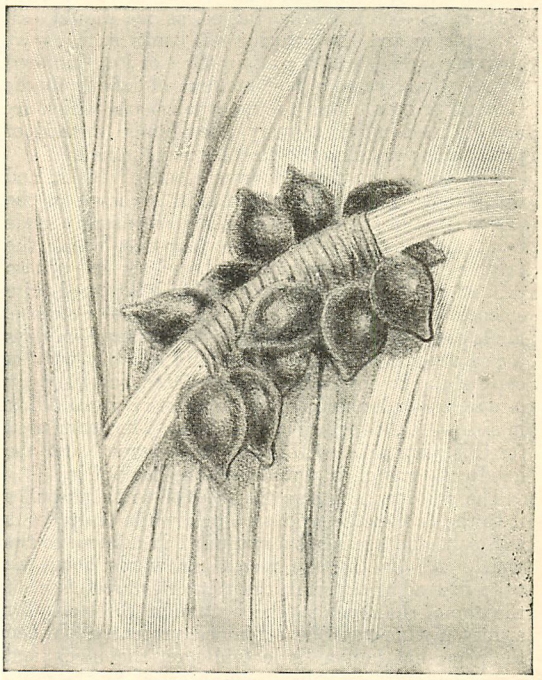


Fig. 7.—Cuttle-fish's Eggs.

a horny case. In insects the shape varies, while the outer case is generally beautifully sculptured. In some other instances, however, many eggs are enclosed within a common case, which also may be of great beauty.

W. P. Pycraft, F.Z.S, A.L.S.

THE FAIRY BIRDS.

HUSH in the Dawning:
You can hear the wing-beats on the window pane,
You can hear Dawn calling,
And its silver notes are falling
As beautiful and sweet as sunlit summer rain.

Listen in the Dawning:
'Tis the Bird of Joy that wakes each child from sleep,
It recalls them from their dreaming
When the golden light is streaming,
And quickly puts to flight night's silence long and deep.

Hush at the Darkening:
'Tis the little Bird of Sleep that children hear;
When each drowsy head is bending
And the long, long day is ending,
It brings sweet dreams to them with fluting low and clear.

PRINTING IN CHINA.

IN China the printing of an ordinary book is a very simple undertaking, which may be entirely performed by one man. The books are, as a rule, very short—such works, indeed, as we should call pamphlets; and the printing of books such as we commonly read, which contain three or four hundred pages, would cause a vast amount of labour to the Chinese printer. But for the small books which are usually read in that country, the Chinese method of printing is very cheap, convenient, and quick.

The books are printed from wooden blocks, and the Chinese printer's greatest skill is shown in the preparation of these blocks. They are usually made from the wood of the native pear-tree, which the printer cuts to a thin block or board the size of two printed pages. The surface of the block is planed quite smooth, and rubbed over with a soft paste or size, made as a rule from boiled rice. The printer employs a professional writer to make him a neatly-written copy of the book which is to be printed, and the copy is written on double pages upon sheets corresponding in size with the surface of the block. The paper used for this purpose is so thin and transparent that the handwriting is clearly visible at the back of it.

The printer, taking up the sheet of writing, applies it to the face of the wooden block, while the paste is still soft, and presses it down until it adheres to the wood. As the Chinese read their words down the page instead of across it, the printer is careful to set the top of the sheet to the bottom of the block, for a reason which will be explained presently. When the paper has lain a little while on the block, and a portion of the ink has been absorbed by the paste and the wood, the workman rubs off the paper carefully without smearing the ink. He has then a clear copy of the writing left upon the wood. By means of suitable knives and chisels he cuts away all the wood upon the face of the block which is not covered with ink, and when this tedious work is completed, the inked parts which are left standing form a copy in wood of the two pages of writing.

In order to print from this block, the printer has only to smear the face of it with ink, and to press a clean sheet of paper upon it, which will absorb some of the ink from the block, just as the block absorbed some of the ink from the written sheet. He selects a thin and rather rough kind of paper, because that will touch all the raised parts of the block better, and will also readily absorb the ink. He holds in his hand a small handle which has a brush at each end. With one of these brushes he spreads the ink upon the block, and with the other he brushes the back of the paper when he has applied it to the block. When he draws off the paper, it retains a perfect impression of the letters on the block. It will be readily seen that as he draws off the sheet, beginning at the bottom, and turns it over face upwards, that edge will become the top of the printed page of the book. This explains why it is that the printer lays the sheet received from the writer upside down upon the block.

The sheets are printed on one side only, and when they are made up into a book they are folded down the middle into two pages, the printed sides being outward, and not inward, as we should naturally expect. A number of these sheets are placed side by side to form the book, but they are not stitched together by their folded edges, as the sheets of an English book would be, but by the outer open edges. When, therefore, we turn over the pages of a Chinese book, we find each leaf double. At first sight we may, perhaps, think that the leaves ought to be cut open; but if we were to cut them, we should find only the two blank pages formed by the back of the sheet which had not been printed upon.

The Chinese printer no doubt finds it tedious to cut his block, but when he has done this part of his work, he can print off sheets rather quickly, just as they are required. It is said that an expert workman can print two thousand copies of a sheet in a day. When he has obtained as many as he requires for the time, he lays his block aside; but if the book should have a ready sale, and his copies run short, he has only to take out his block again and print more. And thus we see that the carved block is not only a ready means of copying the original writing, but that it is also a means of storing it up until from time to time it is required. W. A. ATKINSON.

SAVED BY EXPERIENCE.

THE birds that annually visit our shores quickly become acquainted with the neighbourhood in which they settle. For ten or twenty miles round they will know almost every tree, telegraph-post, church-tower, and other prominent objects. Within this area the birds are comparatively safe from accidents; should they venture beyond, they may get caught, especially towards dusk, in some unfamiliar telegraph-wire, dashing against it with a violence that may be fatal, or may meet with some similar accident through unfamiliarity with the district.

A gardener, working in an outlying plot late one afternoon, saw a sparrow-hawk pursuing a smaller bird. The flight of the birds was swift, and the tragedy that ended the chase sudden. The smaller bird was evidently familiar with the wires and fences, while the hawk that followed may have been a stranger and a trespasser. In the last moments of the chase the smaller bird saved itself by a clever stratagem. A line of wire, almost invisible in the twilight, stretched across its way—an accustomed object to it, indeed, but perhaps its pursuer may not have been aware of its presence. In full flight, the little bird dashed straight towards the thin steel line, swerving aside only by a hair's breadth at the moment when contact with it seemed inevitable. The hawk, now but a foot or two behind, and intent only on following the exact line of its quarry's flight, dashed full on the fatal wire, to be hurled back the next instant a lifeless ball of feathers.

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Continued from page* 331.)

CHAPTER XXXVI.

IT so happened that the very next day the steward of the household at the Stirinof mansion received a telegram from the Countess announcing her inten-

tion of returning immediately. To Paul's surprise he added the following words, after respectfully communicating this intelligence to his young master: 'This is probably in consequence of the news which I underlined in the copy of the *Novoe Vremya* which I sent to the Countess four days ago.'

'What was that?' asked Paul, surprised.

'Certain long-delayed details of the siege of Port Arthur. There were many stories of sorties and of individual acts of bravery, and among them a few lines describing how your Excellency also obtained recognition from the General. The Countess was unaware whether you were even alive, though, of course, we all hoped for the best; but since no letters arrived——'

'No letters!' exclaimed Paul. 'But I wrote several.'

'They did not arrive, Excellency. Doubtless, when the Countess read this great news, she lost not a moment, but started for Russia in order to make personal inquiries for more news of you.'

'Poor Mother!' exclaimed Paul, tears coming to his eyes. 'Not a single letter from me—what agonies of suspense must she have suffered! We will await her here, Mark. She started yesterday; in two days she will arrive. When she sees you, the joy of recovering you will make amends to her for all her sorrow.'

'I don't know,' said the Eagle, sighing. 'She may refuse to acknowledge me, and how shall I prove who I am—I, who only *feel*, and do not actually know, that I am indeed your brother?'

'There is no doubt. She shall feel none. Think of it, man, a *mother*—a mother's love; you do not know what it is. She will take you to her heart at once, instinctively. If we could feel a doubt, it was perhaps natural; but a *mother*, no!'

'God grant it be as you say,' said Mark. 'But I am anxious, nevertheless.'

Then the brothers discussed their plan of campaign. How should the great news of their arrival be made known to her?

For two days they discussed the question. Finally it was decided that the steward should break the news to the Countess by informing her that an officer who had returned from Japan had seen Paul as a fellow-prisoner, and had stated that Paul would shortly return also. '*You* shall figure as the returned officer,' Paul insisted, 'and it shall gradually leak out that you are Mark. Also, you shall break the news to her that I too am here.'

* * * * * *

Countess Stirinof sat in the beautiful boudoir of her mansion in St. Petersburg. The once gay and high-spirited English girl had grown sadly quiet and almost melancholy of late years. Fortune had been somewhat unkind to her. Many years had passed since the days of her first great grief—the loss of her little son—and time had healed the wound as completely as a mother's heart can be said to be healed, a mother's heart that has suffered in the death of her child. She had been left a widow, and again her anguish had been hard indeed to bear. Then Paul had been sent, as we know, to Siberia, and beyond a post-card from old Peter from Yermatsky, mentioning that he had found his young master, she had had no news of her beloved son. As a matter of fact, Paul had written several times; he had informed his mother of his safety, of his presence at Port Arthur, of Peter's death; he had bidden her prepare herself for some great joy which might, he said, possibly come presently to her. But not one of his letters had reached its destination. Who can tell what became of the thousands of longed-for letters from the seat of war—letters that were written, and, oh, how greatly desired—which never arrived! The poor Countess, anxious and nervous at the best of times when her Paul's well-being was concerned, had been filled by his silence with the worst forebodings.

They had attempted to escape, he and Peter, she told herself, and had failed. Paul had been shot; she would never see her son again.

Then came the first news of Paul: his gallantry, his promotion; then news of his captivity. The steward was ransacking the city in order to find, if possible, the young officer who had seen Paul.

The Countess sat in her boudoir and thought over her past troubles. Her reflections were sad—they always were nowadays—and tears came to her eyes. Then she remembered the new-born hopes of the last three days, and she was ashamed of her tears. She hastily brushed them away as the manservant entered and announced a visitor in the drawing-room.

'Who is it?' she asked. 'I gave notice that I am not receiving visitors.'

The man flushed. 'I was to say, Madam, that this is a visitor you would not refuse to see.'

The Countess started. 'André, are you mad?' she said. 'What do you mean? Has the steward found the young officer—is it he? Tell me quickly!'

'I have delivered my message, Madam, as it was given to me,' replied the man, confused. 'I know not who the visitor is; but he is a young gentleman.' André bowed and left the room quickly.

The Countess reflected a moment. A bright colour was in her cheeks. 'Oh, if only it were so!' she exclaimed. 'But surely the steward would have introduced him. I will not hope too much!' Then she rose and went quickly out of the boudoir and downstairs into the reception-room. There, after pausing a moment to recover her composure, she opened the door. At the fireplace stood a young man in officer's uniform. She advanced to greet him, her heart beating fast.

'Paul!' shrieked the Countess. 'My dear son—my own beloved——'

She hastened towards him with arms outstretched. Suddenly, when in the very act of embracing him, she drew back.

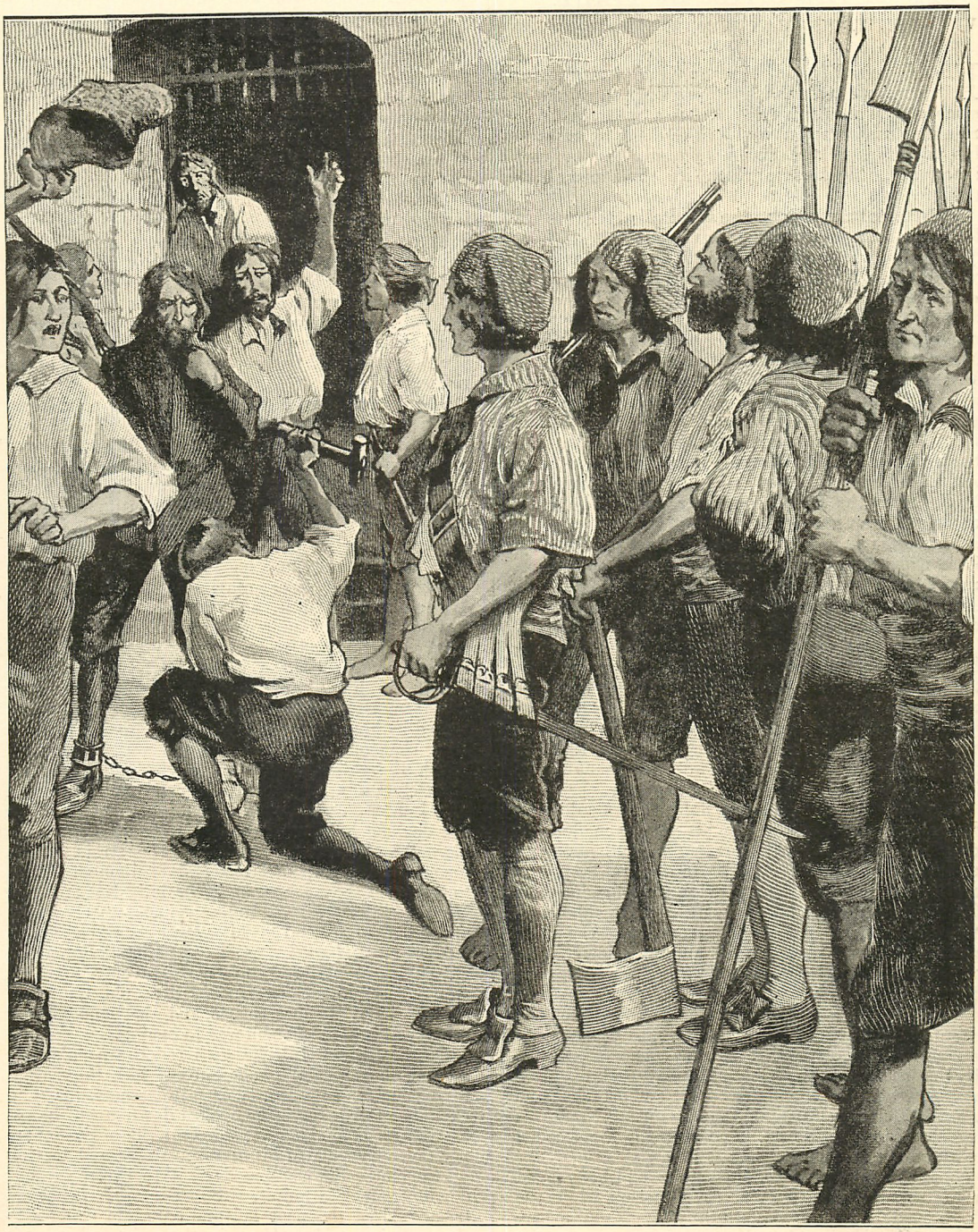
'I—I beg your pardon,' she murmured; 'I have made a mistake. I—I thought you were my son, Paul.'

'Mother,' said the Eagle, speaking in Russian, 'I am your son, Mark. Paul is here also; he is waiting in the library. He sent me in first.'

But the Countess had sunk backwrads into a chair, her head drooped down upon her breast, she had fainted.

(*Concluded on page* 349.)

"'I am your son, Mark.'"



"The prisons were opened, and all prisoners released."

FROM THE CITIES OF ITALY.

VIII.—THE FISHERMAN PRINCE WHO REIGNED A WEEK.

FROM the sad fate of the boy King of Naples, we turn to the story of another young ruler of the same city, whose reign lasted but a week, and who ruled, not as Conradin would have done, by right of his royal blood and ancient lineage, but by that inborn gift of leadership which lifts some men above their fellows.

Tommaso Aniello, or, as the soft Italian tongue that loves to coin a pet name was wont to call him, Masaniello, was only a fisher-lad: not even a seller of fish himself, but just the carrier of the papers in which the purchases were wrapped. In his day, the first half of the seventeenth century, Naples was ruled by the Spaniards, and the people groaned under heavy taxation. The rulers needed money, and the Viceroy sought to raise it by imposing a new duty upon all fruit brought into the town. There was plenty of grumbling, no doubt, when, early in the year 1647, the new tax was announced; but the burden of it began to be really felt when the summer arrived, and peaches, figs, and juicy melons came into Naples from the fertile country round. The town was ripe for an uproar.

There was an old custom of a sham fight on July 16th, when four hundred of the lads of Naples were armed with sticks and stormed a wooden fortress erected in the market-place. Masaniello, the fisherman, handsome, spirited and generally popular, had been chosen as captain of the attacking party, and had begun to arm and organize his little army when the jest was turned to earnest by a quarrel breaking out over the payment of the hated fruit duty. The peasants from the country declared that the tax must be paid by the stall-keepers in the town, and the stall-keepers retorted that those who brought the fruit into the city were liable for the duty.

The dispute ended in a free fight, the smouldering discontent burst forth, and an attack was made upon the offices of the tax-collectors, ending in the triumph of the rioters, who wrecked the house and burnt the books and papers. The people, glorying in their first taste of power, talked joyfully of the abolition of the hated taxes and of the restoration of the city's ancient charter, long neglected and set aside. With one voice they chose Masaniello as their leader. Some say that he had his own bitter grudge against the authorities, who had maltreated his wife on the charge of smuggling a little meal into the city, to escape the duty which her poverty made impossible. Be that as it may, the fisherman's boy took his place at the head of the popular party, and attacked the tyranny that was crushing the life out of Naples as confidently as he would have stormed the wooden castle in the market-place.

For the next few days, Masaniello and his ragged volunteers held the city at their mercy, while the frightened Viceroy promised anything and everything. Considering that the revolutionists were the poorest and roughest of the population, their moderation was extraordinary, and the discipline maintained by Masaniello could only have been enforced by a born leader. The prisons were opened, and all prisoners released who were suffering for refusing to pay the taxes: arms were seized and a few houses burnt, but there was no plunder. A man, who was caught in the act of appropriating the spoils from one of the burning dwellings, was thrown into the flames by his indignant companions, lest the champions of liberty should be branded as robbers. And all through those stormy days, the life and soul of the struggle, the director and ruler of it all, was the youth in the fisherman's shirt, who, a week before, had been earning his poor pittance by carrying papers in the market-place. Seated on a raised platform in one of the public squares, he issued his orders, directed the search for arms and administered strict justice. The Viceroy tried to treat with him; but he steadily refused to lay down his arms, or disband his followers, until the oppressive taxes were removed, the old charter restored, and a free pardon guaranteed to those who had taken part in the rising.

The Viceroy promised to grant these conditions, and a meeting was arranged between himself and the young leader. For the first time Masaniello was persuaded, very unwillingly, to lay aside his fisherman's garb, and arrayed in a magnificent robe of silver tissue he rode through the shouting crowd to receive from the Viceroy the charter which was to restore liberty to Naples. The Viceroy was all graciousness, and anxious to press a magnificent jewel upon the representative of the people; but Masaniello refused it, as unsuitable to his lowly station. He was unhappy and ill at ease in his gorgeous array, and spoke longingly of returning to his old simple life, as if he foreboded already a change in his fortunes. An attempt had been made to assassinate him, and though the bullets passed by him harmlessly, his nerve seems to have been shaken. He knew but too well the means which the rulers of Naples might employ to rid themselves of a dangerous adversary, and the dread of poison or dagger made him fear to eat or sleep. For days he had been working without rest in the blaze of the summer sun, and the strain of the unaccustomed responsibility and excitement began to tell upon the over-wrought brain. His enemies, learned in the craft of Italian courts, watched him and felt that the end of his power was near. His moderation and good sense began to break down; he gave wild orders, and took fierce revenge upon all who opposed him. The unstable people, too, were growing tired of the struggle, and the young leader felt that his hold of them was loosening.

On the 16th of July he gathered the populace in a great church, and going himself into the pulpit, reproached them with their faithlessness, his wild excitement growing as he looked down upon the sea of upturned, anxious faces. In a fit of passionate penitence he spoke of his own sinfulness, and, tearing off the clothes he wore, made as if to throw himself down from the pulpit. Some of his dismayed friends seized the poor lad and bore him away into the cool air outside. Here, in the quiet, where soft airs from the sea wandered in among the arches, and cool shadows lay upon the floor, the mood of wild excitement passed away. The young leader sat resting and looking out towards the blue, untroubled

sea, dreading perhaps to go back to the bustling, distracted world, which made such cruel demands upon his tired brain.

But the fisher-lad's earthly business was finished for ever. His own foreboding of treachery at work was all too true.

'Signor Masaniello,' a voice called him out of the shadow of a cloister.

The prompt attention befitting a captain and leader had returned to the lad, and he rose at once.

'What is it, my people?' he asked, going forward to meet the voice.

But the answer was a volley of musketry, ringing out sharply in the peaceful silence of the cloister, and with the bitter cry, 'Ah, traitors and unjust!' upon his lips, the fisher-lad, who had striven to free Naples, fell dead by the hand of the tyrants whose power he had so nearly broken.

It mattered little to Masaniello that the fickle townsfolk, turning against their hero, cut off his head and insulted his lifeless body. Little, too, did it avail him that, a few days later, they repented bitterly, and laid him in an honoured grave with tears and lamentations. His death was a piteous one, but it came mercifully in time to save the fair fame of the fisherman Prince, who for one short week was the greatest man in Naples, and whose cause was the cause of his country's freedom.

WHAT I FORGOT.

I FORGOT the gracious work it did,
When I wished the rain would go:
That without it flowers would never bloom,
And never a tree would grow.
I forgot that it made the grass so green,
Where I love to run and play;
And that all the world would be parched and bare,
If the rain went away for aye.

I forgot how ignorant I should be,
When I said to myself one day,
'I wish I need go to school no more,
And that life were all holiday!'
I forgot that the wise would point at me,
And gaze with scornful eyes,
Till I should wish, when it was too late,
That I had been more wise.

I forgot how happy childhood is,
And that youth is an age of gold,
When I wished that my days would quickly pass,
And I might soon grow old.
I forgot how many a man of care,
As he watched the children play,
Had sighed for his lost youth back again,
And wished he were e'en as they.

FALSE LIGHTS.

COLD, hungry, and weary with a long sledge journey, a lady, travelling in Siberia, begged her driver to turn aside, and make for some lights she thought she saw in the distance, hoping to obtain rest, warmth, and food.

'Lights, Madam? What lights?' asked the driver.

'Those! A little behind us. Yonder, to the left,' cried the lady pointing to them.

'Lights, Madam?' ejaculated the man, again whipping up his tired horses. 'I have observed them for some time. They are the gleaming eyes and teeth of wolves!'

'Oh, how glad I was,' said the lady, when telling the story, 'to find myself, at last, safe in the streets of a town, and that the wise driver had not turned aside to follow the false lights I pointed out to him!'

Along the pathway of life are many lights of that description. Do not make for them. Beware of false lights!

HEROES OF DUTY.

VIII.—MARY ROGERS OF THE 'STELLA

IT was Easter-time in 1899. On Thursday afternoon, March 30th, the steamship *Stella* put out from Southampton with over two hundred souls on board. It was a special trip for those who wished to spend their Easter with friends in the Channel Islands, though it was a voyage that the *Stella* made almost daily. Southampton had not been left far behind when a fog settled down upon the sea, but as the captain expected every moment that it would lift, and felt confident that he knew his whereabouts, the speed of the vessel was not slackened. All on board were in the best of spirits, talking over the coming holidays and realising that they must soon be nearing the end of their short sea voyage.

The fog, however, suddenly grew denser, and a moment later, to the consternation of all who fancied that miles of water yet separated them from the shore, the *Stella* crashed on to the rocks.

There have been many tales of shipwreck told, some saddened by details of panic and disorder, some brightened by proofs of unselfishness and courage; but few have ever given such examples of self-sacrifice as this one.

From the moment the shock was felt, it was known by all that the ship was doomed, yet orders were obeyed with calmness and dispatch. Among the many who did *more* than their duty that day was the stewardess, Mrs. Mary Rogers, an elderly woman who had been long in the service of the owners of the *Stella*. Calming the fears of a number of ladies, she led them from the cabin to the side of the sinking ship, where the boats were being launched. To each she gave a life-belt, fastening it properly on with her own hands, and then assisted them, one after another, into the boats; but before this task ended, she discovered a lady passenger unprovided with a belt. There was not a moment to spare; the waves were inches deep on the *Stella's* deck, and any instant might be the last. Snatching off her own life-belt she threw it over the other's shoulders, and would hear of no denials. When her last charge was safely in the boat, the sailors called to her to jump as well. The stewardess looked at the frail little overloaded bark for a moment and shook her head.

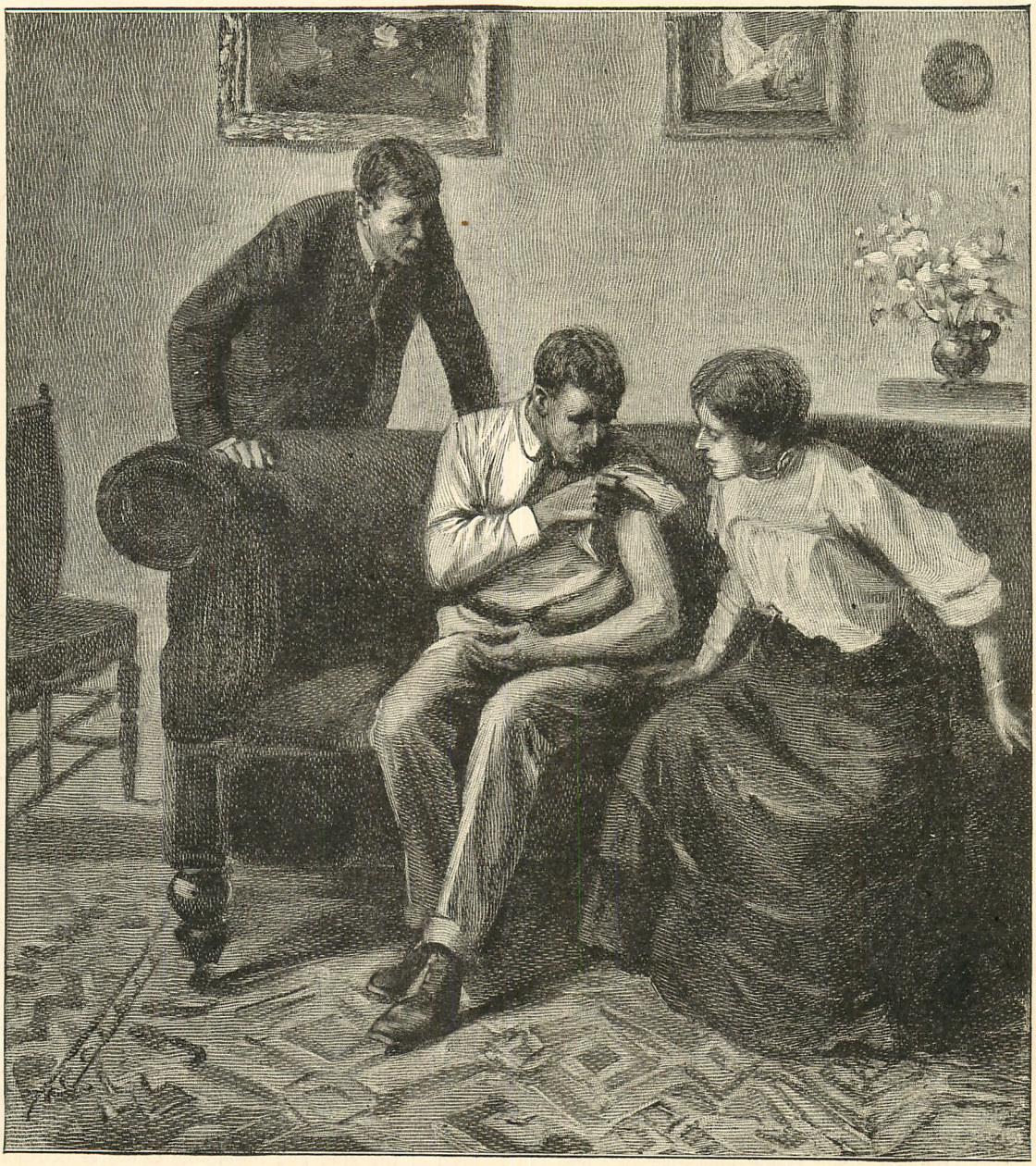
"'No, no!' she cried; 'there is no room for me.'"

'No, no!' she cried; 'there is no room for me. One more would sink the boat.'

With her words there came a great rushing of waters, and as the ship went down those in the boat heard her voice once more.

'Good-bye! Good-bye!' she called, adding, with her hands stretched above her in the attitude of devotion: *'Lord, take me!'*

And who can doubt that the prayer of Mary Rogers was answered?



"The Eagle bared his arm to the shoulder."

A PAIR OF EAGLES.

(*Concluded from page* 343.)

AN hour later the mother and her two sons sat together over the fire; one talked while the other two listened. The Eagle was the speaker. He was narrating for the benefit of his mother his reminiscences of childhood, for the Countess, half convinced, felt that she must be absolutely certain of the Eagle's claim before she could be fully happy. Her mother's heart seemed to yearn towards this youth, and that should be strong evidence to his identity. He was very like Paul, but with little of

Paul's refinement of speech and manner. Would his years of peasant-life account for this?

'Then he has that scar upon his arm, near the shoulder, Mother,' said Paul, most anxious to prove that the Eagle could be no other than Mark. 'Show the scar, Eagle.'

The Eagle bared his arm to the shoulder. The Countess admitted that what remained of the scar was very like the mark left by the wolf's teeth upon the arm of her little son.

'Oh, I would take you to my heart at once, if I dared,' groaned the Countess. 'But if I made sure that you were my son, and it afterwards proved that I was mistaken, I could not bear it.'

Meanwhile the sad news of old Peter's death was sent without delay to his wife at the country estate of the Countess. A messenger was also sent post-haste, in order to summon Mark's foster-father to St. Petersburg—the Starost of the village in which the Eagle had spent his childhood and youth.

Old Peter's widow presently arrived, and begged to see the Countess. With tears she made over to her mistress a communication which went far to prove that the Eagle might be her son.

'Peter made me promise,' sobbed the old woman, 'that the first thing I should do when he died would be to tell you this, which he dared not confess in his lifetime. The child Mark was not eaten by wolves. My husband found him in the forest, and placed him in his woodman's hut, while he went to the mansion to receive orders. He intended to keep him a few hours or a day or two, in order to make more valuable his service in returning him to you, for he desired money—a great reward. For this wickedness he entreated your pardon. When he returned to the hut the child was gone—stolen, as he supposed, by some passing tramp, ignorant of his identity.'

At this point the Eagle remembered Peter's message, and delivered it, that he prayed the Countess, when she learned what learn she must, to think of his long service, and to forgive him. Doubtless, this referred to the confession which his widow was to convey to the Countess after his death.

'Now I am really convinced!' sobbed the Countess. 'Oh, that Peter had been wise enough and honest enough to confess at once!'

'Mother, he has atoned for his sins!' said Paul, kissing her, and the Countess admitted that this was so.

Presently the Starost arrived, and right joyful was the good man to recognise his adopted son, and to be greeted by the Eagle with great heartiness. The Countess listened most anxiously to his tale. 'He was different from us others,' said the old man, 'from the first, like a young kingfisher in a nest of sparrows, a bird that had been stolen from its own nest and deposited in ours. What became of the thief I know not, but, doubtless, since his loss happened as you have told me, it was the old gipsy woman who stole the child, and left him, by God's mercy, at my door; for my wife had been kind to him, most exalted lady, and we have ever given him of our best. Is it not so, Oriol?'

Even the good Starost, being a Russian peasant, could not resist so good an opportunity of putting forward his claim to substantial 'tea-money.' It is in the blood of a Russian to do so.

So the Starost departed with a sum of money in his pocket, such as he had never dreamt of possessing; and, before he passes from this history, it may be mentioned that he laid out his capital with discretion, and that he now possesses a larger number of cows and horses and far more acres of land than any other peasant within many miles of his village.

When he had departed, the Countess took Mark to her arms. 'I am satisfied,' she said, 'you are Mark, my own lost, but ever dear and beloved Mark. If I have been unfaithful to my most merciful Father in heaven, in that I have not fully believed that He would in His good time restore to me my son, may He forgive me. Henceforward I will thank Him daily for you and for Paul; and you, my son, as Paul is, so shall you be. Paul will not be jealous——'

Paul laughed, and kissed his mother. 'Of course I shall, *dreadfully* jealous! What do you mean by coming between me and my mother? Go back to your Starost at once—or to Siberia!'

And Mark, ready to admire Paul's very feeblest attempts to be humorous, laughed—in the joy of his heart—both loud and long. After which he entertained his happy mother with tales of the wit, the courage, the prowess, the goodness and greatness of his adored brother, until Paul ran laughing out of the room, declaring that if his mother was not tired of Mark, he was. 'You'd better take his stories with a pinch of salt, Mother,' he said.

* * * * *

A few more words, and we have finished.

Affairs in St. Peterburg, once the war was over, became exceedingly unpleasant for those who were compelled to live in that unhappy city, and the Countess, who had cut short her visits to her relations in London, suggested a second visit to England.

'A visit!' Paul laughed. 'If you had said, "Let us settle in England for a term of years, or practically for good," I think neither Mark nor I would desire anything better. Leave Russia! I am only too delighted. We shall buy an estate in England, and live in peace. We need not sell our Russian property at present. We are Counts Stirinof, whether we like it or no, and our children, if we ever have any, may like to have a Russian estate.'

So the Countess and her sons packed up their traps and came to live in England, and in our dear old country they are now living. If any of my readers are anxious for details of their place of abode, and the life they live there, they may be heard of down in Loamshire, in the south-west of England; and I can assure you that you will hear nothing but good of the kind and hospitable Countess Stirinof, and that fine pair of 'Young Eagles,' her sons, Paul and Mark.

F. WHISHAW.

THE END.

THE LITTLE BOYS WERE GIRLS.

THE following quaint inscription is taken from a monument in a London churchyard:

'To the memory of Emma and Mary Littleboy,

the twin children of George and Emma Littleboy, of H——, who died July 16th, 1783.

'Two Littleboys lie here,
Yet, strange to say,
These Littleboys are girls.'

THE VILLAGE SHILLING.

'I AM going to raise Brown's wages,' said the Squire to his wife. 'Twenty-six shillings a week instead of twenty-five.'

'What waste!' said his wife. 'Brown doesn't need that shilling half so much as many others of your men do. With a comfortable cottage and garden rent-free, as much firewood as he can burn, and any quantity of odds-and-ends from the garden, he is quite well off. Why not give the extra shilling to somebody who wants it more?'

'Because, my dear, I don't pay wages to men who want money, but to men who deserve it. You may *give* as many shillings in charity to as many poor people as you please, but Brown is *worth* twenty-six shillings to me, and I should not be just if I did not pay it him.'

So on Saturday evening Brown went home with an extra shilling in his pocket.

'That will help with the children's boots,' said his wife.

'No, it won't,' said Brown. 'There's plenty of money in the boot-box to keep them shod this winter. This is going to buy you a shilling's-worth of comfort every Monday for six months.'

'How so?' asked she.

'You are to hire a woman to help with the washing every week. I'm not going to let you grow old before your time, and it's soap-suds, not years, that make a woman old. So now I have got this shilling it's going to keep you young as long as possible, and don't you go and say anything against it, for *that's* settled.'

Mrs. Brown laughed, for she never did say anything against her husband's proposals when he spoke in that tone, and then she set to work to consider whom she would hire for the next Monday, and decided on Mrs. Buster, because she was young and active, besides being a widow with several children dependent on her.

'A shilling a week!' whispered Mrs. Buster, as she hurried down the hill towards her home. 'A whole shilling a week extra through the winter! If that does not keep the boys in boots I don't know what will—and Willie's shall go to be mended this very night.'

So when Willie came in from work, he had to take off his boots at once, and Tom ran with them to old Newbold, who could still do a little cobbling, and asked him to patch them by seven o'clock to-morrow morning as well as he possibly could for a shilling.

By seven o'clock on Tuesday morning they were done, and as Mrs. Buster watched Willie trudge off down the wet road, for it was raining, she thought to herself, 'A good shilling's-worth! He would certainly have come home with bronchitis or something, this evening, if his boots had still been in holes.'

'What shall I do with this shilling?' asked old Newbold of his wife, when Tom had carried off the boots and paid him. 'Do you want it for anything?'

'There's the two shillings for rent safe for this week,' said she, looking into the old teapot on the mantelpiece; 'and my washing money will pay the bread; but what do you say to half-a-pound of tea? There's nothing but a pinch left in the tin.'

'That will be ninepence,' said he, slowly. 'What do you say if I get the change in tobacco?'

'I say yes,' said she, contentedly.

So Mr. Chambers made up the two packages at the shop and put the shilling into the till, and old Newbold had a very happy day with his pipe, and Mrs. Newbold invited her neighbours, the still older Newbolds, to come in for an extra strong cup of tea that afternoon.

'It was a good shilling's-worth,' she said, as they went away cheered and refreshed.

'Oh, James, have you got a shilling to spare?' asked Mrs. Chambers, peeping into the shop from the parlour door. 'Here is a gipsy-woman has got such a nice little basket-chair to sell, and it just fits Jimmie—and it is his birthday—and it's only a shilling.'

Mr. Chambers was a man of few words, but he opened the till and took out the shilling that old Newbold had paid him and gave it to his wife. A minute later Jimmie marched into the shop carrying the chair. He sat on it first on one side of the counter and then on the other, then in every corner of the shop in succession; then at the door and then in the parlour, and kitchen, and passage, and on the stairs, and up-stairs, and then back in the shop again.

'There are so many motors going by to-day to the flower show,' said Mrs. Chambers, 'that it's a good thing the child has something to occupy him. If he were outside the door as usual, he would have been run over half-a-dozen times by now.'

'Then it was a pretty good shilling's-worth on the whole,' said her husband.

'What have you got?' shouted the gipsy-woman's husband, as she came away from the door without the chair.

'Shilling!' said she.

'Come on to the "Queen's Head," said he, eagerly.

'Not I,' said she. 'The brown mare has been going lame ever since we left Liss, and if I don't get them shoes seen to she will be pretty well done for before night. Come on!' This last was addressed to the mare, which she led across the green to Penny's forge.

It did not take long to get the shoes properly fixed, and as the mare trudged up the lane towards the town, she thought that the shilling had been spent well, so it did not much matter if the gipsy-man thought otherwise.

(*Continued on page* 354.)

"'Oh, James, have you got a shilling to spare?'"

"The ducks fell upon the rat furiously."

ANIMAL BATTLES.

NO one who uses his eyes needs to be told how attentive and kind all animals are to their young ones, and how carefully they protect them from danger. The most timid animals, when their young are threatened with attack, will display great courage, and many observers have told of strange battles which have been fought and won by animals which had little but their pluck to aid them.

Eagles, vultures, and hawks, preying as they do upon smaller birds, are held in great dread, not only by wild birds, but also by domestic fowls. Yet instances have been known where the hunted birds, in order to defend their young, have turned upon these enemies and driven them back. A pair of ravens, which had made their nest in the rock at Gibraltar, always attacked the eagles and vultures which approached it, and drove them away.

A gentleman who possessed a hawk which had been injured so that it could not fly very well, watched it one day hovering near a hen which was strutting very proudly in the field with her first family of chickens. All at once the hen caught sight of the hawk and took alarm. She immediately persuaded her chickens to hide themselves here and there among the grass and bushes, and as soon as they were concealed she bravely faced the hawk, and attacked it with such ferocity that its owner had to come to its rescue to save it from being killed.

In another instance, two ducks were quietly paddling about in a pond in a London park with their offspring by their side, when they espied a large rat swimming towards their ducklings. Disregarding the rat's long, sharp teeth, they united their efforts and fell upon him furiously, and they fought with such courage that they kept him off in spite of his savage attack, until a park-keeper arrived and put an end to the enemy.

Not long ago, a gentleman passing through a field saw a hare attacked by several rooks. He wondered why it did not take to its heels and try to reach some place of safety; but the hare, notwithstanding its apparent helplessness, stood its ground, and fought on for ten minutes or more. Eventually it caught one of the rooks in its mouth, and gave it a very rough shaking. This was enough to convince the birds of the hare's courage and determination, and they gave up the contest and flew away. When the spectator approached the spot where the hare was lying, he found that it had been protecting a number of young ones which were only a few days old.

THE BEST IS FREE.

THE loveliest things are given away,
They are not bought with gold:
We cannot buy the sun's sweet ray,
The violet in the mould.

The richest things are free of cost,
They are not bought with price;
Love gives the things we value most
In sweet self-sacrifice.

UNFIT FOR WAR.

DURING a war, every man in a certain country was examined by the doctors, and, if able, was sent to join the army. The doctors were troubled with every kind of excuse, and had to be very careful. One day, a farmer, a peace-loving man, who thought more of his farm and his crops than he did of fighting, was brought to be examined. He told the doctor he was unfit to go, because he could scarcely move his limbs. He had often been out in wet weather, and his body was quite stiff.

'My right arm,' he said, 'is very bad; I can only raise it a few inches.'

The doctor remarked that he must indeed be very ill, and asked the farmer to show how high he could hold the arm when he was quite well. The farmer, without thinking, raised his arm to the full height. His pretence was discovered, and he was sent off to join the army.

PUZZLERS FOR WISE HEADS.

11.—THREE PIED PROVERBS.

1. O, P, E, F, O, L, B, A, K, E, Y, O, L, U, R, O, E.
2. F, D, F, S, E, E, F, D, B, A, A, S, I, N, I, N.
3. A, T, W, T, T, O, W, N, N, E, S, A, O, N, T.

[*Answers on page* 386.] C. J. B.

ANSWER TO PUZZLE ON PAGE 322.

10.—*Chatterbox.*

1. C l i m E
2. H e a R
3. A b s o r B
4. T w O
5. T a X

THE VILLAGE SHILLING.

(*Continued from page* 351.)

'OH, Father! Father!' cried Gladys Penny, rushing out into the yard to meet him as he was coming in to tea. '*Do* say I may! Auntie Sarah is here, and she's going to Hayling Island to-morrow for a week, to her sister-in-law's, and she wanted her to bring Ruby, and Ruby can't go, and Auntie Sarah says she will take me instead if you say I may.'

Gladys had been looking pale of late, her father had thought, and no doubt a week at Hayling would be just the thing for her.

'Well, I don't see why she shouldn't,' he said, looking at his wife, who stood in the doorway.

'There's the journey to pay, of course,' said Mrs. Penny.

Mr. Penny put his hand into his pocket and took out the gipsy's shilling. 'I suppose that will do it,' he said. 'It isn't far.'

So next morning Gladys trotted off with her aunt to the station, and with great satisfaction paid for her own ticket, a half one, with the precious shilling, and then, too happy for words, climbed into the train and started off.

'Well, you have got your roses back,' said Mr. Penny, when, at the end of a week, he lifted her out of the railway carriage. And Gladys began such a long list of all the delightful things that she had done by the seaside, that when he could get in a word, he remarked, smiling, 'Twas a pretty good shilling's worth, I reckon.'

The shilling having been put into the railway booking-office till, seemed to be fairly on its way to some other sphere than our village, but it was evidently meant to remain our village shilling. So when Miss Home, who was going to Portsmouth that Wednesday morning, paid for her ticket with half-a-sovereign, the clerk gave her back Gladys' shilling as change, and, having escaped the danger of being spent in Portsmouth, it came back to the village in Miss Home's purse the same evening.

'Mrs. White has brought home the washing that you wanted in a hurry,' said Miss Home's servant, a few minutes after she had got back, 'and there's a shilling to pay.'

'Here it is,' said Miss Home, and the shilling found itself in Mrs. White's pocket, hastening back to the village street.

'I can get those eggs now that the doctor ordered for Georgie,' said Mrs. White, and she went round by Clark's farm to see whether they had any to spare.

'Yes, I've got some lovely new-laid ones,' said Dot Clark, 'all laid by my own Buff Orpingtons,' and Mrs. White carried them home in a very thankful frame of mind.

Georgie took a turn for the better that very evening, after he had had the first egg beaten up in a cup of hot milk with sugar, and by the time the last was eaten, he was able to come down to the kitchen.

'Seems as if eggs are better than physic,' said his father, as he sat opposite him by the fire. 'It was a pretty good shilling's worth, that.'

'Mother,' said Dot Clark, on the Thursday morning, 'isn't it a good thing I sold those eggs last night? I was thinking I should have to give up going to Rogate to-day, because both my bicycle tyres are punctured; but now I can get young Hayes to mend them, and they will be ready by the time I have made the butter and finished darning Jack's socks.'

And so they were, and as somebody would have been very much disappointed if Dot had not come to Rogate that day, the shilling might feel satisfied that it had again been well spent.

(*Concluded on page* 363.)

THE SKYLARK.

EACH morn he rises to the sky,
And earth and lowly things puts by;
From sky to earth his music rings,
Till every heart responsive sings.

O blithe, brave singer, like to thee
May my young spirit wander free;
To what is high may I aspire,
Soar up like thee and never tire.

A FAMOUS INVENTION.

MR. GEORGE BRAY, the inventor of the well-known gas-burner, had a very remarkable career. His father was engaged in the woollen trade in Leeds, and George, at the age of sixteen years, helped in the business. But the lad's mind, in the leisure moments left to him after the business of the day was done and the work of the night-school had been attended to, fell to reflecting upon the dull, often unsteady, light which was given by the old-fashioned iron gas-burners that were then in vogue. The great defect of this burner was that, in the course of a short time, it became corroded, and the flame from that moment spurted and lost much of its illuminating power.

Bray conceived the idea of substituting for, or adding to, the iron burner a tip of baked porcelain, which would not be corroded. His father's attic in Fenton Street was his first workshop, and here he laboured for nights on end, experimenting and testing. His parents deemed him a 'crank,' and actively dissuaded him from pursuing a course which, as they thought, would end in the ruin of them all.

After some time he removed his rude furnace to a little workshop in Leighton Street. It demanded the fiercest heat possible, and it seemed that now or never the experiment was to be a success. Bray piled the coal on lump after lump, and still there was no result, until at last his supply of fuel gave out. In the last extremity, he hurried to his parents' home in Fenton Street, and, seizing such portable articles of furniture as he could carry, he consigned them to the flames, and, as a set-off against his father's anger, he was able to announce that his desperate resource had met with the reward it deserved.

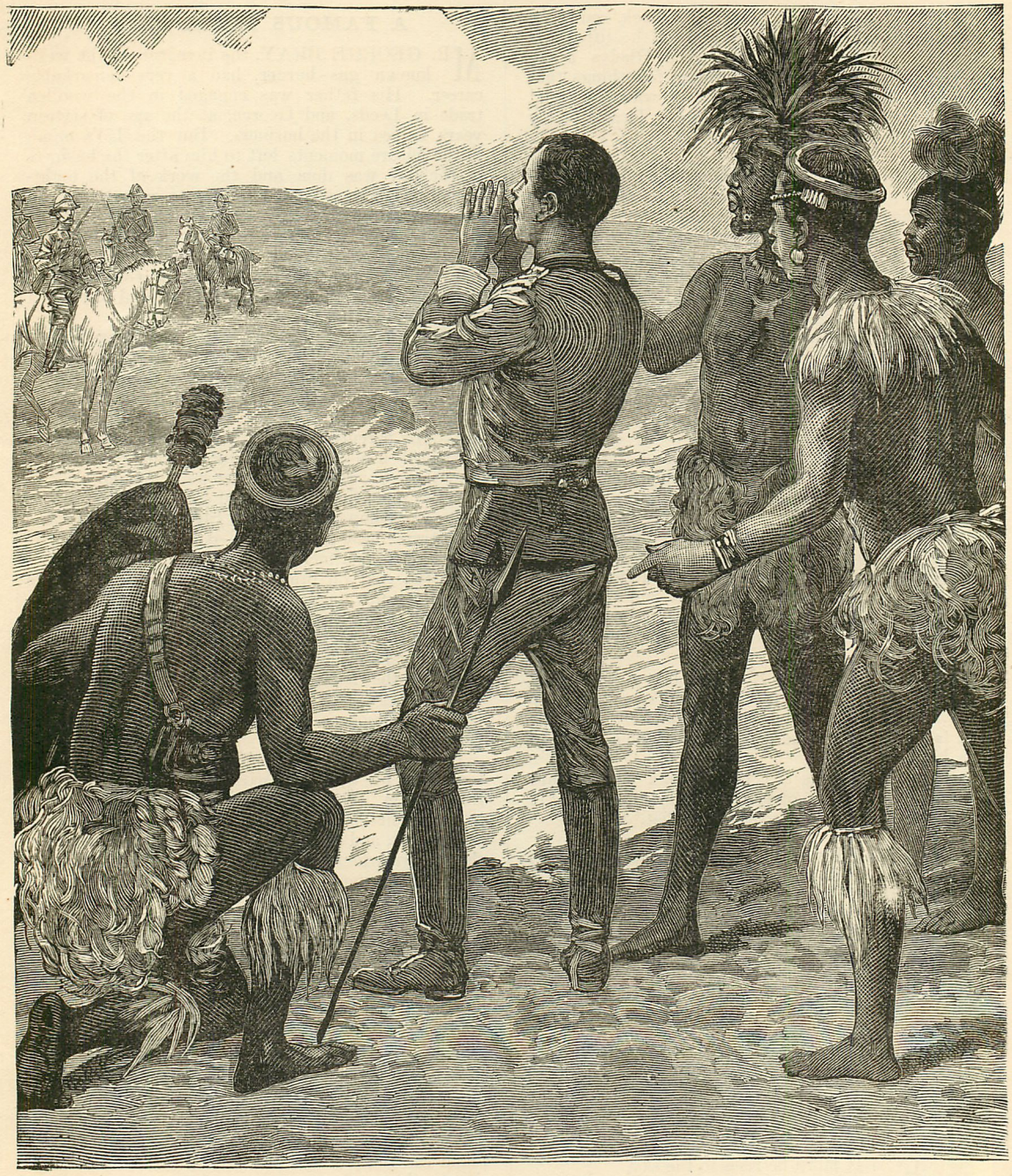
He was then in the spring of youth, and he followed up his discovery with an energy that never forsook him. From six o'clock in the morning until late at night—sometimes all night—he worked, year in year out, and so swift was his success that within the first year he was able to pay out the friend who had come forward with the capital necessary to start the sale of his invention.

The business grew beyond the limits of Bray's wildest dreams, and to-day his firm does business in all parts of the world where gas is used as an illuminant. The firm employs something like seven hundred hands, and the factory is the biggest of the kind in the world.

TRUE TO HIS COMRADE.

IN one of the Zululand campaigns a couple of white men were taken prisoners by the enemy, and a party of English were sent in pursuit. They found the Zulus encamped on the further side of a river, and a parley was proposed from the opposite banks. Neither of the parties understood the other's language, so the Zulus made known their intentions to one of their captives, and brought him to the bank of the river as their interpreter.

The English captain was intensely surprised at this incident. 'Can you swim?' he shouted across. 'If so, jump in and come over now. I will put



"'I cannot leave my comrade!' he shouted.

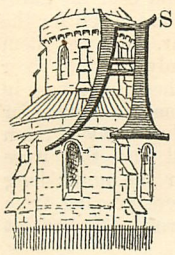
some of my men on the bank here ready to shoot any Zulu who may stir an inch to prevent you.'

But the white man shook his head sadly. 'I cannot leave my comrade!' he shouted. 'He is sick and ill, and the Zulus would ill-treat him if I escaped.'

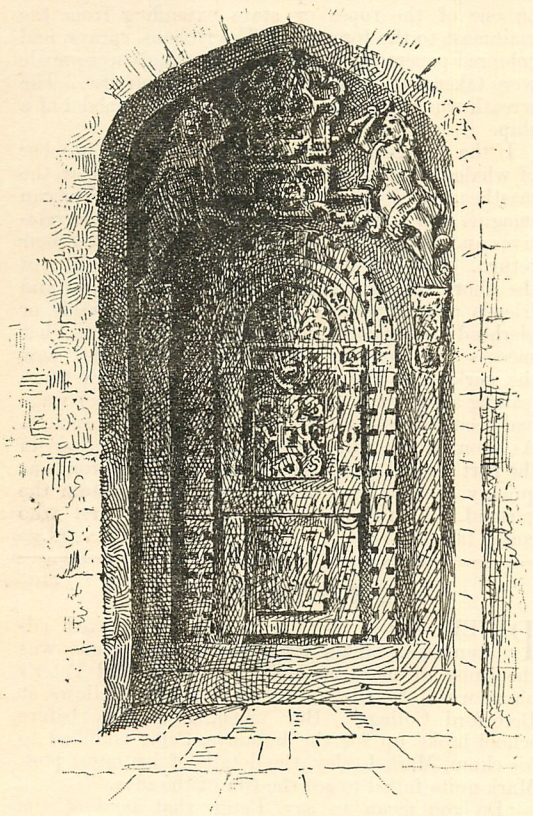
There was but a narrow strip of water between him and safety, and he looked longingly across the stream for a time, but eventually he went back to his comrade. His unselfish conduct was rewarded when both of them were rescued the next day by the English.

DOORS, LOCKS, AND KEYS.

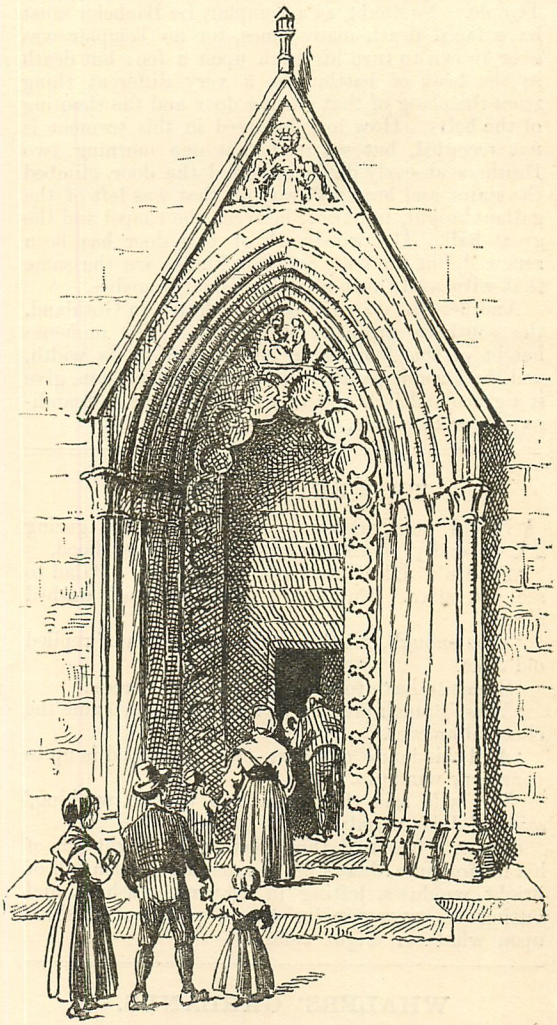
V.—SOME CARVED DOORS.



AS countries became settled and laws respected, people had less concern with the protection of their own lives and property, and found leisure to think about beautifying their surroundings, though in many instances the reverse has been the case—men have thought of ornament before usefulness. Cornices, pillars, ceilings, and window mouldings of elaborate devices came into fashion for great houses, churches, and public buildings, and the doors had a share, often a very large one, in the general decoration. Wood-carving of fruit, flowers, and figures took a prominent place in door decoration. The most beautiful specimens of these may be seen in Holland and Belgium. A fine example, however, may be seen in the Temple in London. The carving is very rough, and the figures are rather grotesque, but the general appearance is massive and effective. This carved work, as well as many other works of art, narrowly escaped destruction in the terrible fire of 1661, when the flames actually blackened the windows of the Temple Church, though happily their mischief went no further. Twelve years later another fire destroyed parts of the Temple buildings, and the rest were saved by strange treatment: the contents of gigantic vats of beer stored in the cellars were poured on the flames.



Door in the Temple, London.



Church Door in Gothland, Sweden.

In the wall of the Temple Church is a small door which has a fascination for every one interested in the history of the Knights Templars, that wonderful body of men who, for over two hundred years, lightened up the Middle Ages with their deeds of valour and self-sacrifice. From this doorway a narrow flight of stone stairs leads to the tiny punishment cell contrived in the thickness of the wall, measuring only

four feet long by two and a half broad. In this miserable prison, where lying down was impossible, many a Templar spent uneasy nights and days, and here Walter le Bachelor, Knight and Grand Preceptor of the Templars in Ireland, was starved to death for disobedience to the Grand Master of the Temple. No doubt, as a Templar, Le Bachelor must have faced death many times, for no Templar was ever known to turn his back upon a foe; but death in the heat of battle was a very different thing from the clang of that closing door and the shooting of the bolts. How long he lived in this torment is not recorded, but we read that one morning two Brothers at early dawn unbolted the door, climbed the stairs, and brought away all that was left of the gallant knight, to bury it between the chapel and the great hall. The woodwork of this door has been renewed, but the bolts and iron hinges are the same that witnessed this and other dismal tragedies.

Another fine door is that of a church in Gothland, the southern province of Sweden. The immense height of the doorway in comparison to its width, and the curious parallel lines of ornamentation, give it a grace and lightness in a style peculiar to Scandinavian architecture.

THE BRIGHT SIDE.

AN old man sat on a roof in Kansas, gazing placidly on the waters of a receding flood.

'Poor old Jake!' said a man in a boat. 'Glad to see you alive. But aren't your fowls all washed away?'

'True enough, Abe! But the ducks swam,' replied old Jake.

'Seems to have torn up all your apple-trees!'

'Wasn't much promise of fruit on them,' came the cheerful answer.

'And this house of yours—why, the flood is up to your very windows.'

'The wife said those windows wanted washing,' said old Jake, calmly.

Surely, if he could thus look on the bright side of his misfortunes, Jake's heart must have been full of bright windows, letting in heaven's sunshine, and letting it out again in cheery patience to shine upon whatever might befall!

WHALERS' GARLANDS.

NEARLY all the whaling-ships which are now sent out make their way to the South Seas, and most of them are American vessels. But in years gone by, when whales were more plentiful in the Arctic Ocean, many whaling-ships were sent out yearly from Hull, Peterhead, Dundee, Whitby, Liverpool, and other British ports to Davis Strait and the eastern shores of Greenland. Whale-fishing was a summer occupation, for it was only in the summer-time that the northern seas were sufficiently free from ice to permit the ships and boats to move about in the search for whales. The ships sailed very early in spring, and they returned home in August, September, or October, in order to escape being frozen in by the winter ice. But they were often caught by the ice, even so early in the year as this, and the poor men had then to spend the long winter alone in the frozen north.

As only the strongest of men could bear the hardships and toil of whale-fishing, it was usual for the same tried men to go year after year. Many of them were expert harpooners, who had only acquired their work after years of practice; and these men were in great demand, and were hired time after time for the same work. It has been said that many of them had never seen a ripening cornfield since they were boys. Every year they started for the north long before the green blades of corn were peeping from the ground, and before they returned the harvest was reaped.

But when they were far away among the ice and snow, their thoughts often wandered back to home and to the summer scenes of their boyhood. There was one pretty little custom by which they honoured May Day, even amid the bleak scenes and toilsome occupations of the north. The crew of each vessel made a garland, and suspended it near the masthead on one of the ropes or stays extending from the mainmast to the foremast. The ribbons, sprays, and coloured papers of which these garlands were made were taken out by the sailors for that purpose. The wreath was very often surmounted by the model of a ship.

If the voyage were successful, and a fair number of whales were taken, the garland remained at the masthead until the ship returned to port. We can imagine how anxiously those at home who had relatives and friends on board the whalers awaited their return. As soon as they appeared within sight of the shore the news spread through the town, and friends and merchants hurried to the quayside or pierhead to welcome the men and to learn what success they had met with; and when they saw the garland at the masthead, and huge jaw-bones leaning against the masts, they knew that the voyage had been successful, even before a word was spoken. As soon as the ship was moored, the elder lads in the port rushed on board, and ran up the shrouds as quickly as they could, each anxious to obtain the garland, which became the prize of the first who could take it.

W. A. ATKINSON.

PETER'S PLOT.

PETER was a born schemer, and loved adventures. This longing for excitement was the cause of many a daring escapade, and Peter's plans were the admiration of his schoolfellows at Beresford College. But when, two days before school broke up for the holidays, Peter confided to his chum, Mark Lesley, the details of his latest plot, Mark quite failed to see the fun of the idea.

'Do you mean to say, Peter, that because the weeding-boy is careless enough to sprain his ankle, and get laid up for weeks, you are going to waste the best part of your holidays taking his place?'

'That is just as you look at it,' laughed Peter. 'I don't call it wasting time; I call it a ripping joke, and a jolly adventure into the bargain. You see, while Jake's out of work, he and his mother have practically nothing to live on, and it's not very

likely Dr. Barry could keep the place open till he gets well again. It all fits in first-rate: the Head has never seen Jake, because the gardener engaged him, and he has only been here a week or so, and although "I say it as shouldn't," I can rig myself up to make an A-1 weeding-boy. I shall send a note to my stepmother asking if I may spend the holidays with you—you won't mind taking my luggage to your place, will you? My mother'—he had got used to calling his father's second wife 'mother'—'won't worry about me,' he added, with a slight sigh, as he thought of the gaiety-loving stepmother who would probably rather welcome the absence of a noisy schoolboy.

'But the gardener will give the show away!' protested Mark.

Peter laughed. 'Oh, no! French is all right. He will do anything for me,' he said.

He had never said anything, even to Mark, about a certain escapade that involved a frantic bicycle ride out of bounds, bringing the doctor to French's cottage just in time to save his baby's life in an attack of croup. The Head, hearing the extenuating circumstances of the case from French himself, had consented to punish Peter privately, when the boy voluntarily confessed to breaking bounds. Since then French would have done anything in his power for 'Master Peter.'

'What do you know about gardening, anyway?' asked Mark.

'Not a bit,' said Peter, cheerfully. 'But French is a good sort, and will put me up to the tricks of the trade.'

So he did, and for the first week Peter's plot went smoothly enough, and it was with great pride he handed over his first week's earnings to crippled Jake. He enjoyed himself hugely; life in the gardener's cottage was certainly very simple, but there was more feeling of 'home' about it than in the 'swell' country house his mother always filled with fashionable guests, from whom Peter kept away as much as he could. Beresford College was a very large school, with some three hundred boys, and the head master, naturally a short-sighted man, did not know nearly all his pupils by sight. On the few occasions when he noticed Peter in the grounds, he did not recognise him. The work, though tedious sometimes, was new to Peter, and kept him out of doors, and the feeling of freedom, with no 'bounds' to be kept, was delightful. Out of working hours it was sometimes difficult to remember his position, and suddenly meeting Mrs. Barry in the High Street, Peter instinctively raised his cap, leaving that lady very puzzled by this gentlemanly salute from a working lad she never remembered having seen before.

Then, in the middle of the second week, a calamity occurred. The gardener was called away suddenly to visit a sick relative, and poor Peter was left to his own resources. French had left him directions as fully as possible, and these Peter did his best to carry out. Unfortunately Dr. Barry decided he ought to overlook personally the work of the new boy during the gardener's absence, so Peter worked under great difficulties, for his methods did not seem to please the critical Head.

When, acting on French's instructions, Peter started to weed that patch of garden in which Dr. Barry took a particular pride, he took special pains not to leave a speck of green visible, and when the Head came round on his usual tour of inspection, Peter felt quite sure that this time at least no fault could be found. The Doctor's expression of horror soon dispelled Peter's hopes. The Head looked from the neatly-hoed ground to the heap of weeds in the barrow, then back again, his anger rising visibly.

'And pray what is the meaning of this—this piece of tomfoolery?' gasped Dr. Barry.

Peter, quite innocent of wrong-doing, stared in astonishment without answering, and the Doctor went on, 'Where are all my seedlings—those seeds that French has been working over and nursing for weeks?'

'Seeds!' echoed the dismayed Peter. 'I—I thought they were all weeds. French told me to clear all the weeds from this patch.'

'Upon my word, boy, couldn't you tell the difference between a plant and a weed, and you call yourself a weeding-boy? I don't know what French was about when he engaged you. Anyhow, you have done quite enough damage in my garden. You can take a week's notice right away. Come to the house this evening, and I will give you your wages,' and with that the irate head master turned on his heel and strode wrathfully away, muttering to himself.

Peter was in despair: not on his own account, for, after all, to him it only meant the abrupt ending of a good joke; but to Jake it meant very serious things. He sat down on the barrow and tried to think of a way out of the difficulty. The only way to save Jake seemed to be by confessing the whole plot, and that meant a severe punishment for himself, he knew. Still, Peter looked on that as the fortune of war, and prepared to face it.

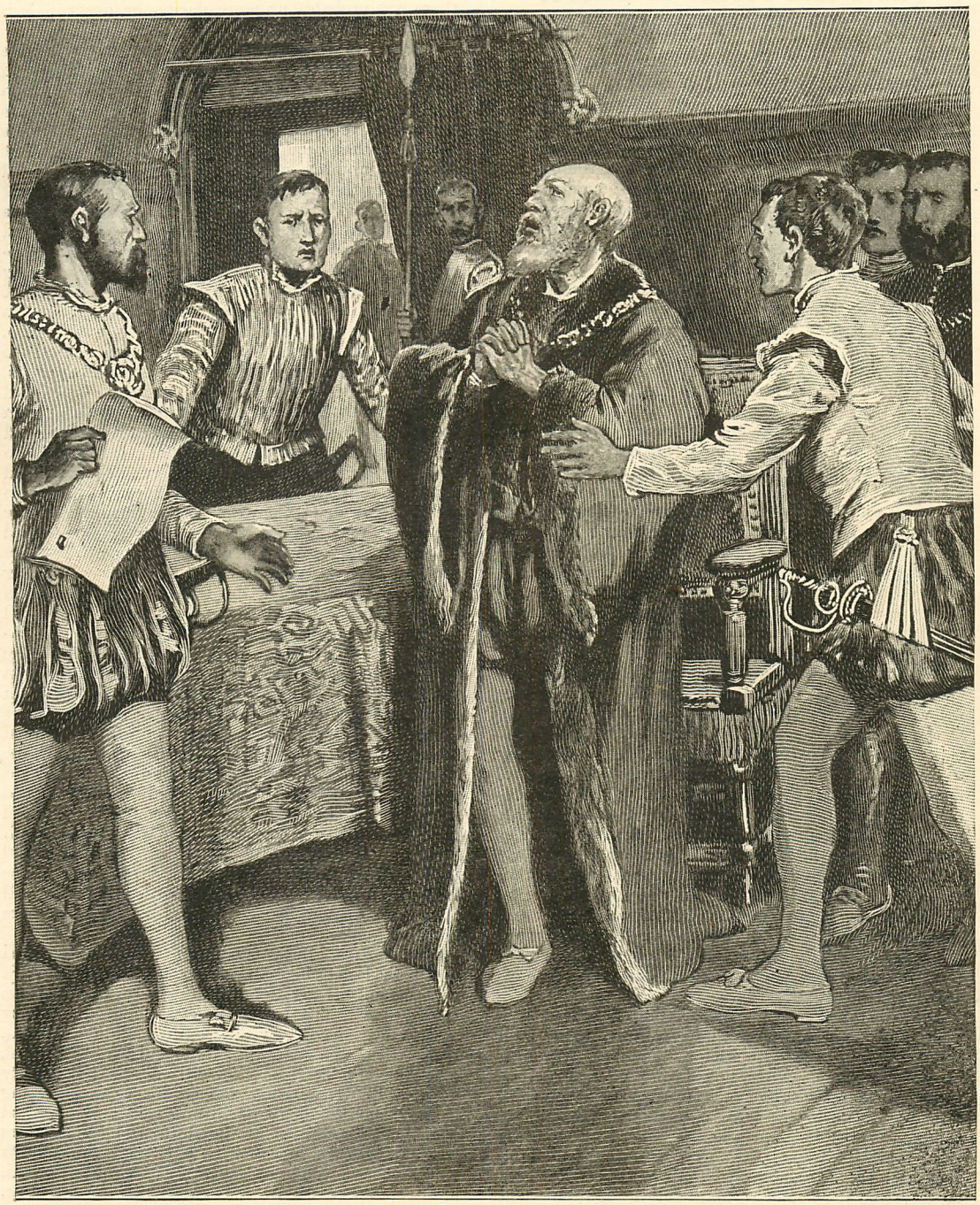
That evening the Doctor was decidedly startled to be confronted with Peter in his proper person, whom he had thought miles away. He was not left wondering long, for Peter plunged straightway into his story, ending with an eloquent appeal for Jake and his widowed mother. He told his tale very simply, but the Doctor was able to realise the real good-hearted desire to help that underlay Peter's plotting, and the evident enjoyment with which he was carrying it out. He knew, too, how little Peter enjoyed his visits home, and sympathised with him, remembering his own similar boyhood. When he spoke his voice was quite gentle, though he spoke sternly.

'Such a deception requires severe punishment,' he said, and Peter foresaw an unpleasant interview. 'I shall cancel the remaining fortnight of your holidays, and during that time you will continue to work under French as you have been doing, and I hope you will give more satisfaction in future. Should Jake be well enough to work before the end of that time, he may continue his holiday until it is time for you to resume your school-work.'

Peter wanted to give an Indian war-whoop, but, although there was a twinkle in the Doctor's eye at the end of the speech, he restrained himself.

'Yes, sir,' he answered meekly. Then he held out his hand, and the Doctor grasped it kindly. 'Thank you very much, sir,' he said.

"'What is the meaning of this?'"



"The old Admiral started to his feet with a ringing cry."

FROM THE CITIES OF ITALY.

IX.—AN OLD SEA-KING.

GENOA, the Gate of Italy, as she has been called, richly deserves her name, for the traveller who enters by that gate meets at once the strange, mysterious charm which has made Italy the 'joy of the whole earth.' Genoa, with her stately palaces, looking out upon the beautiful curve of the bay, is full of memories of her great days of commercial prosperity, of the fabulous wealth of her merchant princes, of the time when she disputed with Venice the sovereignty of the sea. As we step out of the railway station, we are reminded at once, by the statue of Christopher Columbus, that here is the birthplace of that great sailor, that dreamer who turned his dream into a fact, and gave us a new world in the West. To-day we will think of another sea-king, whose name is more closely associated with the struggles and vicissitudes of his native city.

Among the great names in Genoa none stands higher than that of the Doria, and the story of the founding of that family is a romance in itself.

In the days of the Crusaders, Genoa gained many a time both praise and profit by providing ships for the Eastward-bound armies, and it is said that the English war-cry of 'St. George!' was borrowed by King Richard I. from the Genoese who fitted out his galleys. Thither, with the Crusading host came the brave French knight, the Vicomte Orduin de Norbonne, bound for the Holy Land. But the expedition sailed without him, for he fell sick in Genoa, and was nursed back to life by a noble lady of the Della Volta family and her daughter, Oria. He was a gallant and faithful knight, this French vicomte, and he kept his vow, and did his duty in Palestine when he could take the field again; and then, mindful to whose care he owed his recovery, he came back to Genoa, bought property there, and wedded the daughter of his hostess. From her he named his new home Port D'Oria, and, taking the name himself, became the founder of a family famous in the history of the Republic. Greatest among his descendants was the boy Andrea, born in November 1446, the man who was to make Genoa for a time supreme upon the sea, and whose partisanship affected the fate of Europe.

Andrea Doria lost his father while he was still a child, and his widowed mother must have found him what we should describe as a 'handful,' for, like some other great leaders, he was a headstrong, restless boy, much given to neglecting his studies, breaking rules, and running away from home. Strangely enough, it was not until he was over forty that he took to the seafaring life that was to make him famous. He had served already as a Condottiere, or mercenary, as many a man did in those unquiet days, loving the fighting for its own sake, and selling his sword to any leader who would pay his price. It was a hard school, and not a very ennobling one, and when Andrea Doria, a middle-aged man, changed his soldier's life for a sailor's, and had the command of four privateering ships, there was probably no more daring or unscrupulous captain afloat.

Europe was distracted at that time by a struggle between François I. of France and the European Charles V. of Germany, and the French King no doubt considered himself fortunate in securing Doria's services, in return for which he made great promises to Genoa, then occupied by the French troops. But François' promises were never very dependable, and before long the very successes of the Genoese Admiral began to alarm his royal master. So powerful a lieutenant must not be allowed too free a hand, and Doria found himself suddenly superseded in the command. Added to this, the King's favour was being transferred to Savona, the great commercial rival of Genoa, and, as if conscious that the insult to his native city would turn Andrea's wrath against him, François made an attempt to arrest him. But the Admiral was warned in time to escape to Larici, and, furious at the French King's bad faith, he offered his services to the Emperor. Great must have been the joy of the starving city of Naples, then besieged by the French, when the Genoese fleet, fitted out to blockade the town, arrived instead with succours and supplies, and the pendulum of fortune began to swing in favour of Charles. Genoa, inspired by her great son, rose against the French garrison, turned them out, and asserted her independence. The city was in evil case, with the plague raging within her walls; and, for fear of the infection, which made a gathering under a roof dangerous, Andrea addressed the citizens in the square of San Matteo. He exhorted the crowd to cast off, once and for ever, the yoke of foreigners, and to govern themselves as a free Republic. The answer of the people was an enthusiastic offer to make him their ruler. Let Andrea Doria be perpetual Doge—he who had roused them to claim their liberties; let him be lord of the city he had saved. But Andrea would have none of it—that was not his object, he said—and he helped them to form a system of government by which all the principal families were equally represented. Still, he was the most important and influential man in Genoa, and stories of his wealth, and of the lordly hospitality offered by him to the Emperor, still cling to the stately palace looking out upon the blue Gulf of Genoa.

But Andrea, like many another great man, had not passed on his genius to his relations. His nephew and heir, Giannelino, an arrogant, ambitious youth, made himself so unpopular that a conspiracy was formed, headed by the Comte Luigi de' Fieschi, to destroy the power of the family. The old Admiral, once the idol of his fellow-citizens, had, at eighty years old, to fly by night from his palace, leaving behind him the body of his beloved and indulged nephew, Giannelino, murdered by the conspirators between his own door and the harbour. But a swift vengeance overtook the leader of the revolt. Fieschi, in stepping on board his galley in the harbour, missed his footing in the darkness, and was drowned by the weight of the armour which he had put on for the expected struggle. The Doria family became more powerful than ever, and their supremacy lasted until Andrea's death. The old Sea-king lived to within a

few days of his ninety-fourth birthday, and his end was characteristic of his life.

In his palace by the sea the old man was eagerly awaiting news of another beloved great-nephew, Giovandrea, who was commanding the Venetian fleet against his own old enemies, the Turks. But Giovandrea was no such captain as his great kinsman, and, in the dark November days, tidings of defeat and disaster came to Genoa. It was whispered in the Doria palace that the young Admiral had fallen, and the news came as a death-blow to the old man, who doted on him. For three days he sat huddled together in his chair, hardly speaking or eating, and those around him whispered that he would never rouse to consciousness again. Then, through the awe-struck waiting group of friends and servants, came a messenger bearing letters. A friend leant over the old man's chair and spoke into the deafening ear: 'A messenger is come.'

To his surprise came the quick question: 'What news?'

'By the grace of God—good,' was the answer.

The old man's trembling fingers clutched the letter, but the dim eyes could not decipher the words, and it was the friend's hand that broke the seal, his voice that read aloud the tidings that Giovandrea was safe, and would shortly be in Genoa. Then, to the amazement of all, the old Admiral started to his feet with a ringing cry, and the voice, that had so often shouted orders above winds and waves, rose once more in thanksgiving to the God Who had spared his beloved kinsman. And while those around stood gazing in awe and wonder, he sank back into his chair, the momentary strength gone, and the flickering life died quietly away. MARY H. DEBENHAM.

HEROES OF DUTY.

IX.—WILLIAM DRAKE.

ON the afternoon of April 2nd, 1869, a carriage containing two ladies was being driven into Hyde Park, London, by what is known as Stanhope Gate, when the road was suddenly obstructed by another carriage crossing in front of it. To avoid what seemed a certain accident, the coachman tightened the reins, throwing the horses back on their haunches. This action put such a strain on the long central pole that it snapped in two with a loud noise, and the frightened animals instantly became unmanageable. Another moment and they would have been in full career, with consequences terrible to think of; but in that moment two men ran forward at the risk of their own lives to save those in the carriage. One was a policeman named Wright; the other, William Drake, a passer-by. Seizing one of the horses by the head-straps, he checked with great difficulty its efforts to get away, but had hardly succeeded in doing so when he was hurled down in the roadway by its wild plungings and rearings. As he fell, one of the flying hoofs struck him a severe blow on the right knee. Faint with the terrible pain, he was borne by sympathising hands to St. George's Hospital, and some ten days later died of an illness brought on by the wound. When an inquiry was held to ascertain the exact cause of his death, one who had been present at the accident bore witness to the courage and determination with which William Drake had tried to do his duty before he was struck down, and those whose lives he had saved undertook, as a token of their gratitude, to befriend the wife and little children he had left behind.

THE VILLAGE SHILLING.

(*Concluded from page* 355.)

YOUNG Hayes walked slowly along the village lane, passing the shilling from one hand to the other again and again, as he reflected on the many ways in which it might be spent; but as he crossed the village green, a bright idea struck him. His father had been ill for some weeks, and his mother was nearly worn out with nursing him. 'I will tell you what it is, young man,' the doctor had said that morning, 'your mother will be ill next if you don't do something to help her.'

It never entered young Hayes' not very brilliant mind that he might nurse his father himself; in fact, it would never have entered anybody's mind that he could be capable of doing such a thing; but there was Mrs. Fisher, old Fisher's widow, standing at her cottage door, and she was always ready to help anybody in times of sickness. The young man eagerly asked her whether she would come that night and let his mother get a little rest. Of course she did, and next morning, when young Hayes saw his mother looking almost like her usual bright self after a good night's sleep, and his father considerably refreshed by Mrs. Fisher's skilful nursing, he thought to himself, as he laid the shilling in her hand, ''Twas the best way of spending it, to be sure, and I don't deny I have got good value out of it.'

As for Mrs. Fisher, she went home with the shilling in her pocket, and all the way down the street she kept saying, 'Thank the Lord! Thank the Lord!' For to-day was rent-day, and she had been wondering and worrying as to where the last shilling was to come from that would make the sum complete. Now she did not mind how soon the collector might call, and as he put the village shilling together with the others into his bag, she thought what a weight of care one little shilling can lift from a human heart.

The rent moneys were poured out on to the table in the Squire's business room, and counted out and put in different piles, and it was a curious coincidence that when the Squire paid his gardeners that Saturday evening, he handed Brown a sovereign and two half-crowns and a shilling, and the shilling was the very same one that he had handed him the week before.

And Mrs. Brown paid that identical shilling to Mrs. Buster again on the Monday, and Mrs. Buster paid it to old Newbold for mending Tom's boots the time. But what the subsequent uses were to which it was put, I cannot now stop to tell you. Only you will be glad to hear that it still stayed in our village, sometimes making as many as a dozen people

"The Squire handed him the very same shilling."

happy in a single week, and seldom lying idle, and if now and then it was spent on things that the spender would have been the better without, it was so very often spent on things that the spender would have been the worse without, that I think it made up for it. And though it is doubtful whether it was ever given to any one in charity, it made more people happy than did many of the shillings which the Squire's wife distributed so kindly among her pensioners, for it was always well earned.

SOME OF NATURE'S MARVELS.

VIII.—ANIMAL HAIRS.

THE feathers of birds are absolutely unique structures, found nowhere else but on the bodies of birds; they also form the only covering of all birds. But with the hairs of mammals this uniformity is by no means general. Strictly speaking, hairs are as peculiar to mammals as feathers are to birds, inasmuch as the hair-like, and

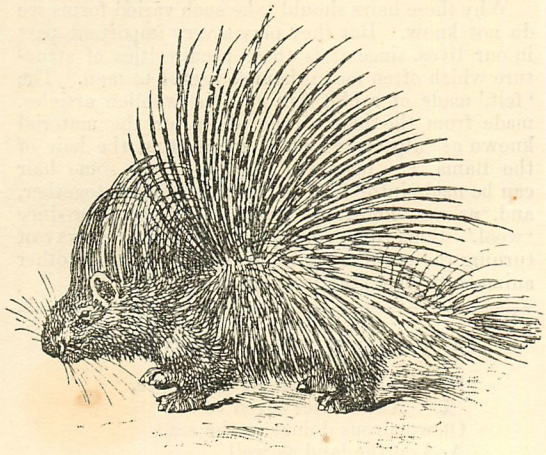


Fig. 1.—Porcupine.

often furry, growths which are found in many of the lower animals, such as insects, are really of a different nature from hair. But with this we need not concern ourselves here. For, whether hair is peculiar to mammals or not, it is by no means the universal covering of these creatures. The whales and

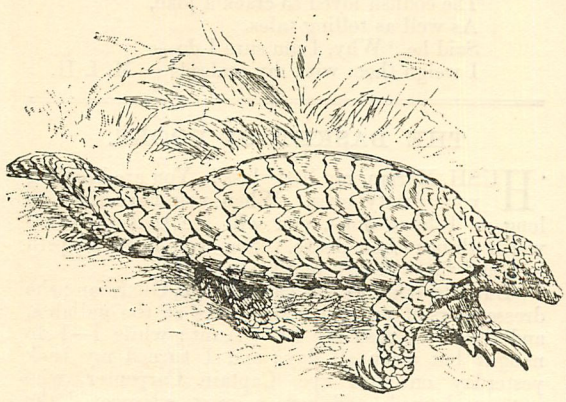


Fig. 2.—Manis.

porpoises, for example, are absolutely hairless. The elephant, when adult, is very nearly so. The armadillo, again, is practically hairless, the body being encased in a bony armour. The hedgehog and the porcupine (see fig. 1) present another extreme, the greater part of the body being covered by sharp spines, while the manis (see fig. 2), a species of ant-eater, is covered in curious overlapping scales.

Yet, when we come to look into the matter, we shall find that these very un-hair-like outgrowths of the body are often only highly modified forms of

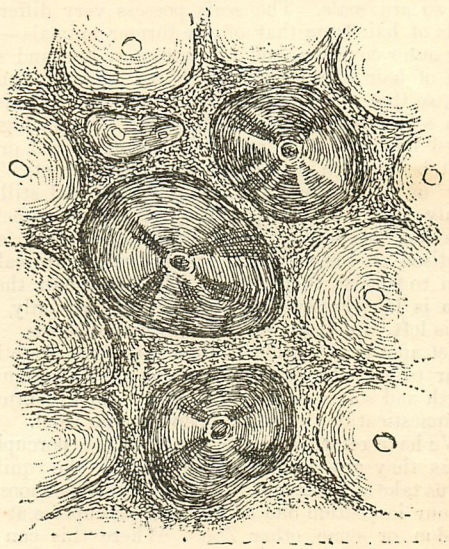


Fig. 3.—Section of a Rhinoceros' Horn.

hair. But before we come to the question of the structure of these, let us look briefly at some of the more remarkable developments which hair undergoes.

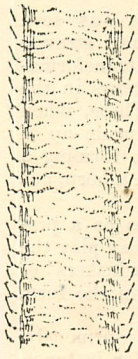


Fig. 4.
Man's Hair.

Fig. 5.
Squirrel's Hair.

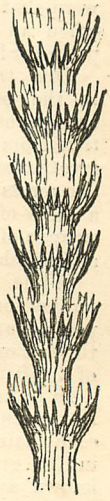


Fig. 6.
Bat's Hair.

(All highly magnified.)

The hairlessness of some animals is more apparent than real. The human body, for instance, though for the most part apparently hairless, is really not so; only the palms of the hands, the lower portion of

the back of the first and the whole of the back of the second and third joints of the fingers, the knees, and the soles of the feet being really hairless, though most of the hair is so fine as to be invisible till carefully looked for.

The horse and dog are typically hairy animals, and so are seals. The seals possess very different kinds of hair from that of the former animals—the long outer covering, and an extremely fine and soft kind of hair which is much shorter than the outer coat, so that it can only be seen when this is raised. This softer hair is known as 'fur,' and is highly prized by fashionable people for warmth and ornament, being worn in the form of muffs and coats. The 'fur' of the fur-seal, for example, was, and still is, highly prized for this, and to secure it nameless atrocious barbarities were (and still often are) practised on the wretched victims which are called upon to furnish their skins. The outer hair therefrom is laboriously removed, till at last only the fur is left, which answers to the down of birds.

Yet another valuable kind of hair will doubtless occur to you—the wool of the sheep. The peculiar length and softness of this is due to long centuries of domestication, for wild sheep have no wool.

We have referred to the spines of the porcupine, or, as they are more generally called, the 'quills.' Let us take a closer look at them, if possible choosing for our inspection one of the live porcupines at the London or some other Zoo. Where this can be done, it will be found that every stage is to be met with, from long, rather coarse hairs to longer and extremely powerful spines or 'quills.' And from this and other reasons we may gather that the formidable armour of spines has come about by a thickening of the hairs. These quills are very ready to drop out; thence has arisen the fable that they were shot out in a shower, like a flight of arrows, when an enemy appeared to be threatening their possessor!

This transition from hair to spines—as seen in the porcupine and hedgehog—seems strange enough, but what are we to say of the transformation from hairs to horns? Yet this occurs in the great nose-horns of the rhinoceros. These, when cut across and polished, are seen to be made up of a mass of fine hairs cemented together, forming a weapon of great power. A piece of such a horn, cut and polished, is shown in fig. 3.

While hair for the most part serves as a protection for the body, in some cases it may play the part of an organ of touch, as in the 'whiskers' of the cat, or the long hairs which project in the form of a tuft from the legs of many animals.

In its microscopic structure hair varies enormously. In the curious South American sloth, for instance, each hair is 'fluted' along its whole length, and in the grooves thus formed a minute green plant, known as an *alga*, grows, forming a coloured patch in the creature's back, which enables it the more closely to resemble the tree-trunks and boughs amid which the sloth passes its whole life. The peculiar qualities of the fur of the mole, again, are due to the fact that the hairs are thicker in the middle than at either end; or, in other words, they are spindle-shaped, and on this account they may be brushed either backwards or forwards with impunity, a very useful quality for a creature which has to move backwards or forwards in narrow underground tunnels.

Hair under the microscope, either whole or in section, often looks very beautiful. In fig. 3, for instance, is a section—a piece of the horn of a rhinoceros—showing the separate hairs embedded in a general cementing matter. Fig. 4 represents a piece of the hair of a man, fig. 5 of a squirrel, and fig. 6 of a bat.

Why these hairs should take such varied forms we do not know. But they play a very important part in our lives, since it is these peculiarities of structure which often make them so useful to man. The 'felt,' made of rabbit fur, and the woollen articles, made from the hair of the sheep, or the material known as 'alpaca,' which is made from the hair of the llama, are instances of this. Only some hair can be made into 'felt,' or become matted together, and, as you know, no animals but sheep produce 'wool.' Some day, perhaps, we may find a way of turning the peculiar structure of the hairs of other animals to some practical purpose.

A PERT YOUNG CODFISH.

THE codfish had a roguish eye,
And stories loved to tell
Of wondrous doings in the sea,
And on the land as well.
So long as he could spin a yarn,
He didn't care a jot
If those who listened to his tales,
Believed his word or not.

'You do not weigh your words enough,'
Said Mother Cod one day,
'I really am ashamed of you,—
Such foolish things you say!'
The codfish loved to crack a joke,
As well as telling tales,
Said he, 'Why, I am sure I do—
I weigh them with my scales!' M. I. H.

THE BASKET OF BOOKS.

'HUSH, Marian, my little lass! You are blinding your pretty eyes. When you have lived as long as I have done, you will see that there are worse things than death. See, you have Elspeth left, and she will be a mother to you.'

'But Elspeth does not care as I do, Guardian; she dresses herself up and makes eyes at the gallants, and tries to please my Lady Aunt; while I—I do naught but weep all day; and I turned my back yesterday on that ape, Captain Carpenter, who is to go home'—and here a great sob escaped the speaker—'and rummage in the dear old rooms for the books you want.'

'Nay, child, that is unjust to Elspeth. Remember that the loudest tears do not always hide the sorest hearts; and I know well that both my wards are troubled about me, even if they take different ways of showing it.'

'Troubled, Guardian! I think I shall die if the worst comes; but come it shall not!'

Elspeth Wintoun's voice rang clear and defiant through the little cell, making both of her listeners start. She was only a girl of sixteen, very fair to look upon, with a face which reminded one of lilies and roses, and rippling auburn hair; but now her face was set and white, and her lips were pressed closely together to keep back the sobs.

It was no wonder that she looked distressed, for the slight fragile-looking man who was seated on the low wooden couch, with her little sister clinging in an agony of tears to his neck, was her cousin and guardian, and the only father either she or Marian had ever known; and now he was a prisoner in the Tower—condemned to death for taking part with James Stuart in the rebellion of 1715. True, the sentence would not be carried out for a month, but what chance was there of saving him? Elspeth and her sister were orphans, who, when the news of the surrender at Preston had come, and the arrest of Lord Wintoun, along with many others, had become known, had been adopted by an aunt, Lady Fortescue, a staunch Whig, who had up till now taken no notice whatever of her nieces. Perhaps she realised that if Lord Wintoun were at liberty to dispose of some of his wealth, which rumour said he would be allowed to do, she might find that the hitherto despised girls were left heiresses; moreover, Elspeth promised to be unusually beautiful.

'At all events it can do no harm to be friendly towards them,' she had thought to herself, 'until I see how things turn out.' So for the present she gave them cold hospitality at her stately house by the side of the Thames, and spared no opportunity of jeering at them because of their guardian's disloyalty.

The Earl drew Elspeth's auburn head down to his shoulder tenderly:

'Make no rash vows, sweetheart; you are but a woman, although I know your will is strong. As I say, life has not been so easy for me that I cannot go without much regret, although I would have gone more contentedly had I known that Marian and you were wedded to good men. These are hard times for women; but I trust I may be allowed to make dispositions in your favour. You will see the young soldier who goes north, will you not? Tell him where the papers are, in the iron box in the coffer, and in the folios in the library.'

'Yes, Guardian,' said Elspeth steadily, 'I will remember. It was for that that I was so civil to the young gallant, that I might spare no chance of influencing him, so that he may remember all that is needed.'

'I would rather kick and scratch him,' said little Marian viciously; 'he would not even let Walter Stewart, our serving-man, who came from the castle, ride with his men—"In case of plots," he said.'

'Plots,' muttered the Earl sadly; ''twould be a case of the mouse and the lion. Poor girls! I would rather lose my head twice over than that you should be embroiled in any plot.'

When the two girls reached the narrow attic chamber, which Lady Fortescue had set apart for their use, they were greeted anxiously by Janet, their own serving-maid.

'I am so glad you have returned, Mistress Elspeth,' she said, glancing at Marian's swollen lids and Elspeth's white cheeks; 'my Lady Fortescue's own maid has been up to say that you are to be in the withdrawing-room at half-past seven. The gentleman who is to go to Perth, and visit the Castle on his way, is to call to take his orders from you, and my lady desires that you should both appear.'

'Oh, Janet,' cried little Marian, laying her head on the kindly woman's lap and bursting into tears; 'how can I go down and talk and pretend and laugh with the pages when the Earl is left all alone in that dark cell, and I know that he never will be taken out until—until——' but the words refused to come.

'Hush, my lamb,' said Janet tenderly; 'try not to cry, and Janet will wash your bonnie face and brush out your hair. It will anger Lady Fortescue if you go downstairs with swollen eyes and tear-marked face.'

'What care I for my Lady Fortescue, with her powder and her paint and her airs and graces?' cried the child; 'she is a cruel, heartless woman to expect us to go down and be shown off when she knows that we have been to the Tower.'

Elspeth had meanwhile thrown off her cloak and was pacing up and down the little room with a strained look on her young face, her hands clasped in front of her.

'Oh, Marian, be quiet and let me think,' she said at last, 'my brain is distraught with sorrow, and I must have it clear, quite clear.'

'To laugh and talk with the gay young Captain,' sobbed Marian. 'Oh, Elspeth, I thought you had more heart.'

But Janet read her young mistress's face better. Laying Marian's little fair head softly down on the bed, she came across to where she stood.

'Mistress Elspeth,' she said in a whisper, 'what can I do to help? I would do anything—anything for his lordship, and for you.'

For a moment the tears stood in Elspeth Wintoun's eyes. Then she grasped the woman's hard hand and spoke low and eagerly: 'You will be true, Janet, even though it lead us into danger?'

'Till death!' said Janet earnestly, and the compact was made.

'Then,' said Elspeth, her voice once more steady and her eyes bright, 'you will help me to look my best, my very best, to-night. What shall I wear? Tell me quickly, for I hardly know what I am doing—my head feels like fire.'

'The white satin, mistress; it suits you to perfection, and I will arrange your hair in the latest mode—I noted it in the park but yesterday.'

'And stay, Janet; before Marian awakes'—for the little girl had fallen asleep, worn out by weariness and sorrow—'she is but a child, and it would be a shame to load her with secrets; will you go down to the pastrycook's for me, near the gate, and buy a cake for me, of sponge, set with cherries? It must be small enough to go into this little comfit-box. And purchase also some cherry-coloured ribbon, and—listen—borrow also a sharp knife from the scullery as you come in.'

(*Continued on page* 370.)

"I would rather lose my head twice over than that you should be embroiled in any plot."

"'Tis but a small thing to ask, to give this comfit-box to the old woman at the lodge.'"

THE BASKET OF BOOKS.

(*Continued from page* 367.)

A VERY stately young lady was Mistress Elspeth Wintoun as she sailed into my Lady Fortescue's withdrawing-room an hour later, dressed in a robe of white satin looped up to show an under-skirt of cloth of silver, and wearing white plumes in her lovely auburn hair.

No wonder that the gallants who were assembled there bowed low and crowded round her, while my Lady Fortescue, a toothless old woman, powdered and painted, and dressed to look young, although she was over sixty, flattered herself on her niece's good looks. To be sure, little Marian, who crept in behind her sister, looked sadly woebegone, but then she was only a child of eleven, and who would notice her?

The old woman smiled to herself as Captain Carpenter, who was heir to old Colonel Askew of Mouton Manor, in the county of Warwick, went up to Elspeth and bowed low.

'Good evening to you, Mistress Elspeth,' he said; 'behold your humble servant ready to do your bidding. I set out in the morning for Perth, and call at the Castle of Wintoun on my way. Are there any commands which you can lay upon me? I have orders to bring the books and papers for that—hem! —that unfortunate gentleman, who was lately your guardian, which he wishes to have in order to settle his affairs; and if there is any commission which I could undertake for you I shall only be too happy to do so.'

Little Marian, listening in the background, clenched her hands over the packet which she held—a comfit-box elaborately tied up with cherry-coloured ribbons. She hated this false-faced man, with his flattering words and wily tongue; but Elspeth answered in a strange, careless way that made her little sister's heart sink.

Was Elspeth—strong, true, womanly Elspeth—whom, though she grumbled at her, she loved with all the strength of her impulsive heart, going to become like all the rest of the dressed-up Court ladies?

'Many thanks, sir; you do me too much honour, but you will find the burden of books quite heavy enough to carry without any gewgaws of mine, even if I possessed any at the dull old place. But I have one request to make, after I have told you where the books and papers are to be found. 'Tis much trouble, I know, to bring them, and right good it was of his Majesty to grant such a boon to my unhappy kinsman, for without them he could not have settled his estate, and Marian and I would needs be left penniless.'

'Heaven forefend,' thought the young Captain to himself, but he only bowed again and said in honeyed tones, ''Tis a pleasure to do your bidding, Mistress, and to think that I am serving your sister and yourself by ensuring that any part of the unhappy gentleman's estate should be settled on you, and as to any commission for yourself, I promise to undertake it ere you ask it.'

'Well,' said Elspeth sweetly, 'there are the papers in the little iron box in the great coffer in the hall; old Richard the porter will give you the key for that. Then there is a pile of old manuscripts and papers in the carved chest in the library—you had best bring all those—and three leathern-bound books which Richard will give you from behind the curtain in the Earl's bedroom.'

Marian's blue eyes turned rounder, and she opened her mouth to speak, but a look from her sister stopped her. She had been going to remind her that the three leathern-bound books were the heaviest in the Castle, and were of no use, as they only contained some old sermons printed in Highland Scotch, which were not understood in England; but she dared not speak with that look in Elspeth's eyes.

'They shall certainly be brought,' said the young soldier gallantly, though in his heart he wondered why on earth so many books were needed to help a man to make his will.

'And as for the other commission,' went on Elspeth, lifting her eyes pleadingly to the young man's face, ''tis but a small thing to ask, to give this comfit-box' —and she took the box from little Marian's hands— 'to the old woman at the lodge. She was our guardian's nurse, and she thinks the world of Marian; it will cheer her heart in these dark days to think that we remember her. Tell her it is to be eaten at once—these cakes spoil soon.'

The girl said the last few words so earnestly that the young man looked a little suspicious. In those days of plots and counterplots it behoved a King's messenger to be careful.

Elspeth noted his look.

''Tis but a sponge-cake set with cherries,' she said with a pretty little show of indignation, and she made as though she would have undone the ribbons.

'Not for worlds!' protested the young soldier; 'Mistress Elspeth's word is as sacred as her oath; and to show how I trust her, I will seal it with my seal, so that the old dame may know that it reached her hands exactly as it left her young lady's.'

So with many jests the seal was affixed, and shortly afterwards the captain took his leave.

(*Continued on page* 378.)

AN INTERESTING BRIDGE.

VISITORS to Kandy, in the island of Ceylon, are shown in the neighbourhood a beautiful bridge made entirely of satin-wood, and spanning the river Mahavillagange in one fine, sweeping arch. It was constructed by Major Skinner, a clever military engineer, many years ago. One of the most remarkable points about it is the fact that no bolt, screw, or nail is used in any part, and, notwithstanding the changes of temperature, all parts remain perfectly in order and position.

A SWALLOW'S FLIGHT.

JUST watch that swallow come and go
Across the meadow green!
He skims the brook where rushes grow,
He mounts the air serene.
The blue wing that a moment since
Yon poplar's summit found,
Now fans a golden buttercup
Three inches from the ground.

Headlong he whirls in agile flight
By many a garden flower;
Now tilting left, now tilting right,
At eighty miles an hour.
He shoots above the weather-vane
That crowns the village spire,
Then skims where beds of celandine
Are spread like sheets of fire.

His shadow flits with giddy speed
Across the cattle-pond,
Evades the tangling rush and reed,
And scales the bank beyond.
So light the movement of those wings,
Their passage so unheard,
That watchful sight can hardly tell
The shadow from the bird.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

True Tales of the Year 1807.

V.—THE CAPITULATION OF MONTE VIDEO.

IT is not good or honest to be constantly recording only British victories or glories: we must face the fact that our arms have not always been triumphant, nor our generals infallible; hence this story of the fiasco of Monte Video may serve to drive home a wholesome lesson.

* * * * *

'Well! we are to move at last!' exclaimed a young sergeant eagerly, as he entered the barrack-room, or to speak more correctly, the open shed, thickly thatched with pampas grass, where he and his brother-sergeants were sheltering from the fierce sun of that South American climate.

'I shall wait till I hear the bugle-call before believing that, Randall,' answered one of the party, languidly raising himself from a couch on which he had been trying to sleep off the weary hours. 'Why should we move now, when heaps of our men are down with fever? No! you take my word for it, our General will stick on these plains till he has not a man fit for service, and then he will have to be recalled, and I suppose that's what he wants; anyway it looks like it. He ought to have been called *White-feather* instead of Whitelocke, I'm thinking.'

'Don't shout so loud, if you must say such treasonable things,' said Randall, in a warning voice. 'The men might hear you, and it is no good discouraging them; for whether you believe it or no we are to take Buenos Ayres to-morrow—the Captain has just had me in his tent to talk over matters.'

'Really!' said Thompson, in a very different voice from what he had hitherto used, as he sprang from his couch, and began polishing up his rifle. 'I will go by the Captain!—if he says it, it's true; and the sooner we start the better I shall be pleased, for we have hung about these old sheds long enough.'

It was the year 1807, and Great Britain was at war with Spain. Buenos Ayres, which our troops had captured only a few months before, had since been regained by the Spanish, and in consequence of this, General Whitelocke had been sent out from England with reinforcements, and with orders to recapture the town at all costs.

This he could easily have done had he acted with ordinary promptness and decision, for he found a strong garrison of British troops holding the neighbouring port of Monte Video, and with the troops already under his command, General Whitelocke had altogether a force of twelve thousand men, all in fine condition, and eager to be led against the enemy.

But, for some inscrutable reason, the General, having landed his forces on the plains outside Buenos Ayres, took no further steps, but kept the soldiers there, idle and discontented. They saw the chances of victory daily lessening before their eyes, as the enemy were meanwhile straining every nerve to strengthen the defences of their city.

So no wonder that there was general rejoicing amongst all ranks when it became known that the attack was to take place on the following day; but when the day dawned, and the orders for the attack were made known, the dismay was great!

The whole army was to be divided into columns, and at the head of each column two corporals were to march, bearing tools for breaking down the walls and opening the gates. All the guns were to be unloaded, and no firing was to be permitted till all the columns had reached their final points and formed.

This plan of Whitelocke's was so evidently impossible, that it was almost ludicrous. It sounds more like the plans for a review than for active service, and it is only generous to suppose that the General's brain must have been affected.

However, he was the Commander and had to be obeyed, and the several columns started as ordered to approach the city at different points, and Randall's regiment stood under the walls of Buenos Ayres without one shot from the garrison being fired.

'Is it to be a walk over?' Thompson managed to say to his friend, as the regiment formed up outside the walls.

The words were hardly out of his mouth before they were attacked by the Spaniards with most relentless fury. The flat roofs of the houses were all occupied by men who poured volleys on the soldiers below. Each householder with his negroes defended his own dwelling, which was thus in itself a fortress.

Our soldiers fought most bravely, though they were terribly cut to pieces before they could even effect an entrance through the walls. Many of the columns were separated and cut off from the rest, and were so decimated that they had no chance but to capitulate.

Still, by dint of hard fighting and much bravery, General Whitelocke found himself at the close of the day in possession of the market-place, which was the centre of the town, and he had quite a third of his force with him, who firmly intended at daybreak to renew the fighting and capture the city.

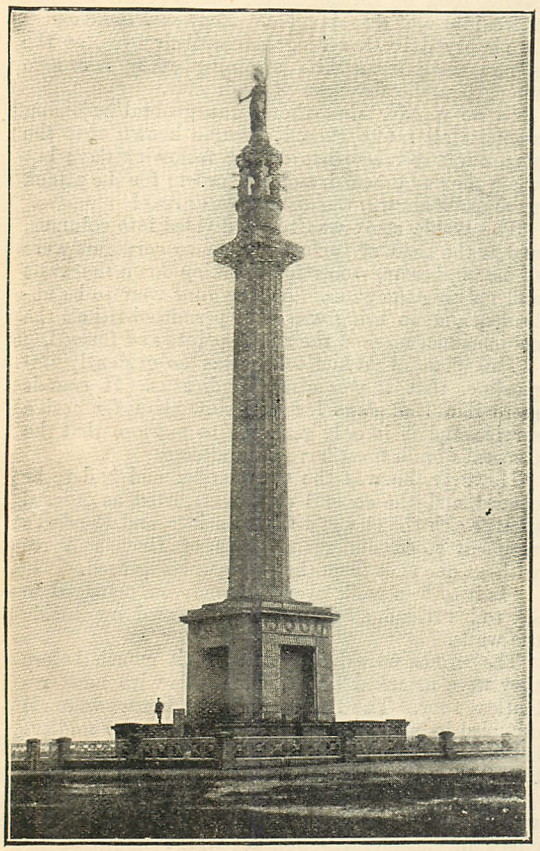
But when daylight came, there were no orders to attack, and by-and-by came the strange and disgraceful information that the General, foregoing all the advantage that the bravery of his troops had gained for him, had made a shameful treaty with the enemy, in which he undertook to retire from the country; and, worst still, to yield up the fort of Monte Video.

Nothing could exceed the fury of all classes in England when the news of this surrender reached

them. It is said that had Whitelocke arrived himself with his dispatches, his life would have been forfeited.

As it was he had to appear before a court-martial, and receive his sentence—'to be cashiered as wholly unfit to serve his Majesty in any military capacity whatever.'

Thus ended the fiasco of Monte Video.



THE NELSON COLUMN AT YARMOUTH.

AFTER the battle of the Nile, Admiral Nelson ordered on board every ship a thanksgiving for the victory which had blessed his Majesty's arms, by the guidance and power of Almighty God. The stillness and solemnity of this service, and the attitude of the fleet during the performance, made a deep impression upon both friends and foes. Nelson was now at the summit of glory; during his journey back to England high honours and congratulations were showered upon him by Princes and Powers, to whom 'this victory gave a respite.'

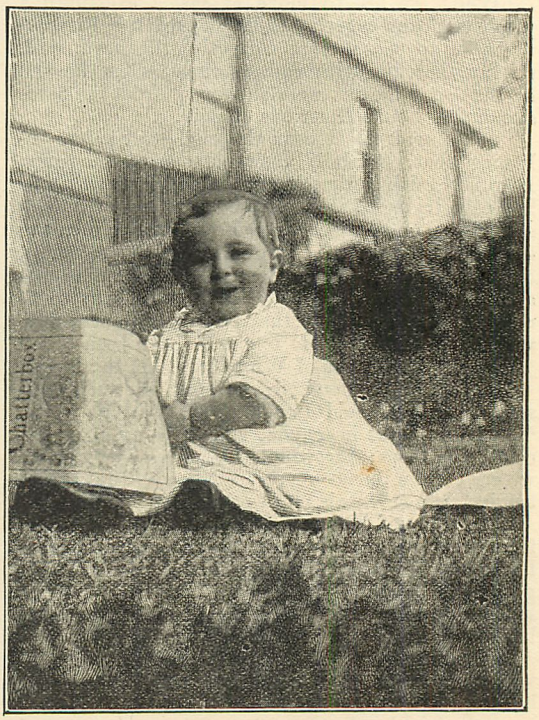
On reaching Yarmouth the rejoicings were great, and on landing Nelson attended a thanksgiving service in St. Nicholas' church. On the South Denes stands the Nelson monument, a memorial of an Admiral of whom this country may well be proud.

The column was designed by Wilkins, and was erected by the Norfolk inhabitants in the year 1817 in honour of their hero. It consists of a Doric pillar one hundred and forty-four feet high, crowned by an exquisite statue of Britannia, who holds in her hand a trident—the sceptre with three prongs usually seen in the hands of Neptune—a fitting symbol for the great Admiral through whom the nation gained dominion of the seas; a laurel wreath is also held by the figure. The pillar is placed on a terrace, to which there is an ascent by steps. Upon the plinth are the names of the four ships on which Nelson flew his flag—the *Vanguard*, the *Captain*, the *Elephant*, and the *Victory*. On the coping of the terrace are the titles of his chief battles: Aboukir, St. Vincent, Copenhagen, and Trafalgar. There is also a long inscription in Latin.

The column is well placed here, on the very spot where Nelson landed after two of his greatest victories. It has been rightly said that an old Greek epitaph most aptly applies to it:—

'By the sea's margin, on the watery strand,
Thy monument, Themistocles, shall stand.
By this directed to thy native shore,
The merchant shall convey his freighted store,
And when our fleets are summoned to the fight,
Athens shall conquer with they tomb in sight.'

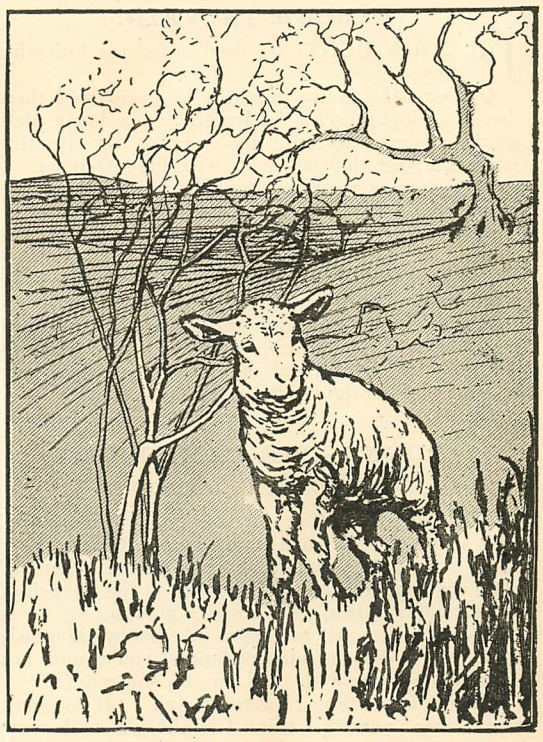
(Our photograph is by F. K. Sayers.)



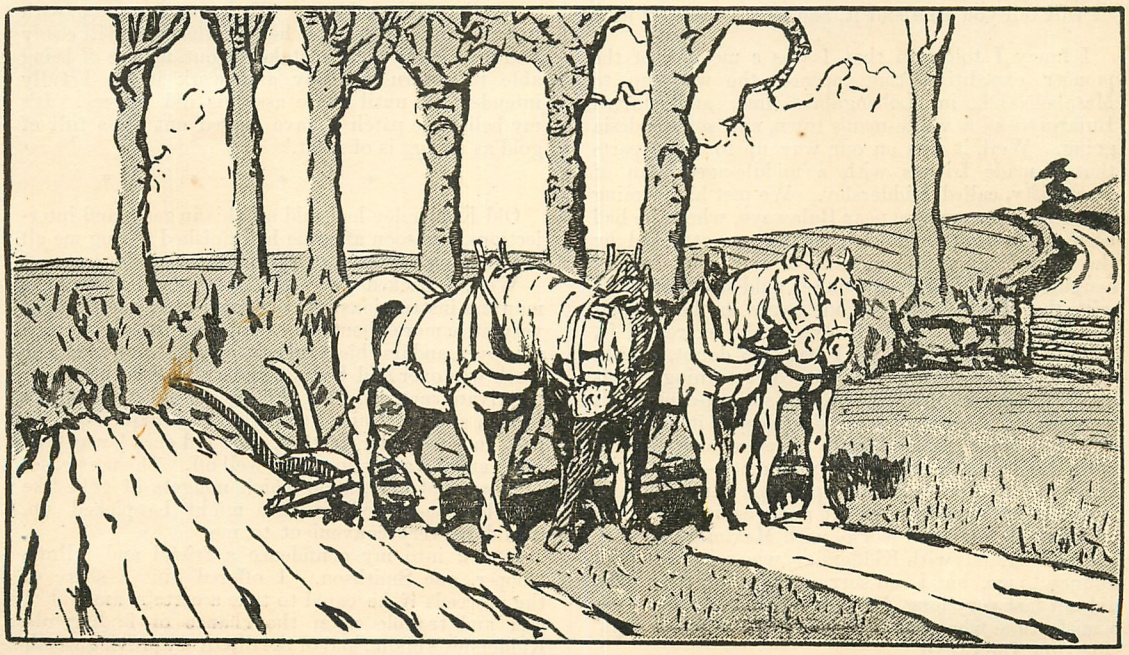
"QUITE HAPPY."

(A Portrait of one of the youngest "Chatterboxes," aged 18 months, sent us by his father.)

The Cart without the Horses. Find the Two Horses.



The Lost Lamb. Find its Mother.



The Idle Plough. Where are the Two Ploughmen?

THREE COUNTRY PUZZLES.

LABOUR IN VAIN.

DR. JOHN BUNTING used to tell the following story.

Opposite the house in which he once lived there dwelt a doctor, who, as usual, had a brass plate on his door. Morning by morning Dr. Bunting noticed a poor idiot lad, who, with his tattered coat-sleeve, stopped regularly to rub vigorously at this plate.

'Why do you do this, my boy?' at length he asked.

The idiot looked up furtively. 'I hate him!' he whispered. 'I am rubbing his name out!'

Futile effort! An honourable name can never be really effaced by malice. Like the good Doctor's doorplate, the harder and more perseveringly it may be rubbed, the brighter it becomes.

ROUND THE CAMP-FIRE.

II.—VANDELEUR'S GOLD-MINE.

'I SUPPOSE neither of you fellows is aware,' said Vandeleur one night, as the trio sat over their camp fire yawning, having chased a herd of little antelopes all day and dined upon the haunch of one of their victims, 'that I own a gold-mine?'

'I am charmed to hear it,' Bobby laughed; 'perhaps, under the circumstances, you would not mind obliging me with the loan of a sovereign?'

'Where *is* the mine?' asked Ralph. 'If you don't want it for yourself, I think I might like to borrow a spade somewhere and have a dig in it for myself. I'm always glad of a nugget or two.'

'Well, if you are not too sleepy,' said Vandeleur, 'I will tell you all about it, and how I came by it.'

I fancy I told you that I was a member of the pioneer expedition that opened the way up to Matabeleland, in Lobengula's time, and started Bulawayo as a white-man's town, and set Rhodesia going. Well, it was on our way up to those parts that I made friends with a middle-aged man of about fifty, called Kiddersley. We met him coming down from somewhere near Bulawayo, where he had been prospecting for gold, when he was attacked by the Matabele, who had chased and very nearly caught him. This disappointed gold-seeker, furious with the Matabele, joined our party in the hope of 'getting back a little of his own,' as he expressed it, from his enemies; he was, I have no doubt, glad to find an opportunity in this way of returning to his quest, for it was clear to him that so well-equipped a party as we were was bound to succeed in its mission: We were going, remember, to measure our strength with Lobengula's *impis*, or regiments—soldiers as brave and as capable as any upon this earth, though, poor fellows, they were as yet unacquainted with the modern rifle, and still worse, with Maxim guns.

I made friends with Kiddersley, who seemed to take a fancy to me, but I am sorry to say our friendship did not last very long, for poor Kiddersley met with a misfortune when our little column was a few days' ride from Bulawayo.

An impi of Matabele fellows contrived to ambush us in a narrow ravine between steep cliffs, and, alas! six of our poor fellows were killed outright by their assagais, besides a dozen or so who were wounded, more or less badly. Among these latter was poor Kiddersley, who had lagged a hundred yards behind the rest of us. It so happened that I was able to ride back and drag him under shelter as he lay wounded on the ground—no great feat in reality, though he was pleased to be very grateful. Kiddersley had been pierced by three assagais, and did not live more than a few hours. During those hours, I sat by his side and received and jotted down a lot of messages to friends and relations in Capetown and in England, and the old fellow, grateful for this service, surprised me presently by insisting upon making me a substantial reward.

'I haven't told you or any one else,' he said, 'what I am now going to say, and I shouldn't have breathed a word of it, if I wasn't absolutely sure I was going to die; those Matabeles have done for me; first they spoiled my game up-country, and now they have killed me. Now you listen, my boy, and you will hear of something to your advantage. You know I told you I had been prospecting for gold? Well, if it had not been for that impi of Matabeles disturbing me at the wrong moment, I believe my fortune would have been made by this time. Look in the inside of the Norfolk coat I was wearing; there's a packet, give it to me.'

I found in the inner breast-pocket a heavy packet.

'Open it!' said Kiddersley, and I did so, breaking seals and cutting string. Within was a paper drawn over with lines and half covered with written matter, and wrapped in the paper was a nugget of gold, the size and shape of a banana!

'I want you to give the nugget to my little sister—you have her address. The paper is a map with instructions. With the help of that you will easily find my claim. I have staked it out, in case of being able to return one day and work it, as I fully intended to, until those assagais did for me. It's my belief the patch I have staked out is as full of gold as an egg is of meat.'

* * * * *

Old Kiddersley had said all this in gasps and interjections, and soon after he had finished telling me all that was on his mind to say, he breathed his last.

Well, I packed away the nugget and popped the map and instructions into my paper-case, and thought very little more about either until our little campaign was over, and its object fully attained. But when our work was over and I was able to give some attention to private matters, I got thinking of old Kiddersley's legacy, and determined to make some inquiries. At this time my elder brother, poor old chap! was still alive, and I was by no means well off. The possession of a patch of land, upon which nuggets of gold like this banana-shaped treasure might be picked up, would be very convenient to me.

I took into my confidence a friend and fellow-trooper, one Smithson. I offered him a share of the proceeds if he cared to take a certain amount of risk and trouble upon the chance of finding old Kiddersley's claim, and of the discovery proving worth the trouble.

Smithson seemed to like the idea, and we set out

upon our gold-hunt. Kiddersley's map gave the distance from Bulawayo to his claim as fourteen miles. We were to make for a certain peculiarly-shaped *kopje*, or hillock, which he described as 'Sugar-loaf Hill.' Upon this hill he had built a cairn of stones, half-way up the slope. To find the claim, the instructions told us, we must 'set our backs to the cairn,' and walk straight for a certain large tree growing alone in the veldt at a distance of about five hundred paces. At the foot of that tree was planted the first of the stakes which he used for pegging out his claim. These stakes were driven well into the earth, projecting to a height of some four feet. They were placed so firmly that it was most unlikely any animal could remove or break them by rubbing against them. There were eighteen of these stakes in all, and between them they included a plot of land of about the size of an acre.

The instructions seemed simple enough, and Smithson and I set out with light hearts. We found the Sugar-loaf Kopje without difficulty, but, having placed our backs to the heap of stones or cairn erected upon it, and looking from that position in every direction, we saw no signs of any tree.

Smithson was for throwing up the whole matter as a hoax But I had a better opinion of Kiddersley. The man had been grateful to me: his grievance had been against the Matabeles, not against me.

'That's all jolly fine,' said Smithson; 'but trees can't walk away, and these instructions say plainly enough that a tree stood somewhere over there. Well, there is no tree.'

'There may be the stump of one,' said I, with a sudden thought. 'The Matabeles may have camped somewhere about, and they would, likely enough, cut down the trees for firewood.' I don't know why I made this suggestion, but the idea came suddenly into my mind, and it proved to be the correct solution of the mystery.

We found, after an hour's search, the stump of the tree: it was hidden in tall, rank glass, and close to it were the remains of a charred spot which told of the fate which had befallen the trunk and branches. But when it came to searching for the stakes which should have marked out Kiddersley's gold-zone, there was not one to be found; it was clear that the Matabele fellows had seen them, discovered a use for them, and taken them away—to burn, perhaps; possibly to make themselves short assagais, or clubs after the fashion of their knob-kerries.

'I don't think it matters much,' I said, 'for Kiddersley merely pegged out a claim at haphazard, to enclose the spot in which he picked up his nugget. Probably we are as likely to find others anywhere about, just here; at any rate, I'm for a search!'

We had secured our horses, and placed our limited stock of provisions close to the stump of the old tree, and we now began to make an exhaustive search for any indications of the presence of gold. The sun was scorching hot, and as the day wore on, and our efforts met with no success whatever, the depression of failure began to sit heavily upon us. We grew melancholy, weary, and very angry and disgusted with things in general.

'At any rate let's eat something,' said Smithson, crossly throwing down his small pick-axe, for we had each brought a little weapon of this description to scratch the earth with, 'I don't believe in your friend Kiddersley; he——'

For the tenth time we began and went through the arguments for and against poor Kiddersley's good faith, and for the tenth time we disagreed. We did agree, however, that lunch would be a good thing, and together we made a move for the spot where the knapsacks containing our provisions for the day had been left. Something moved as we neared the spot. There was a curious sound, and a largish animal darted away into the long grass, and disappeared.

'A hyæna!' cried Smithson; 'the brute has been at our food!' He bent down and seized a stone which lay at his feet, throwing it in the direction of the thief. A gleam of sunlight caught the stone as it left his hand.

'Stop—don't throw it!' I shouted, but too late. 'Mark the place exactly!' I yelled, and starting to run I made for the place where his missile seemed to disappear in the long grass.

'What are you doing?—are you mad?' roared Smithson, but I continued my career. I flung myself upon my knees in the grass; I parted the long rank stalks to right and to left, and went forward, still on my knees, and sought again. Suddenly I saw the object I sought, and pounced upon it.

'Here, Smithson!' I yelled; 'look—gold, man, a nugget! You picked it up, and shied it at the hyæna, you *did*—look for yourself!'

And it was indeed as I had said—Smithson had picked up a nugget, a thing of the size of a golf ball, though irregularly shaped, a lump of pure, splendid gold—picked it up and used it to shy at a hyæna!

Vandeleur paused, and Ralph cleared his throat. Bobby spoke:

'Now, if I didn't know that, in comparison with fellows like Ralph, there,' he said, 'you are a respectable kind of fellow, Vandeleur, and unlikely to indulge in falsehood——'

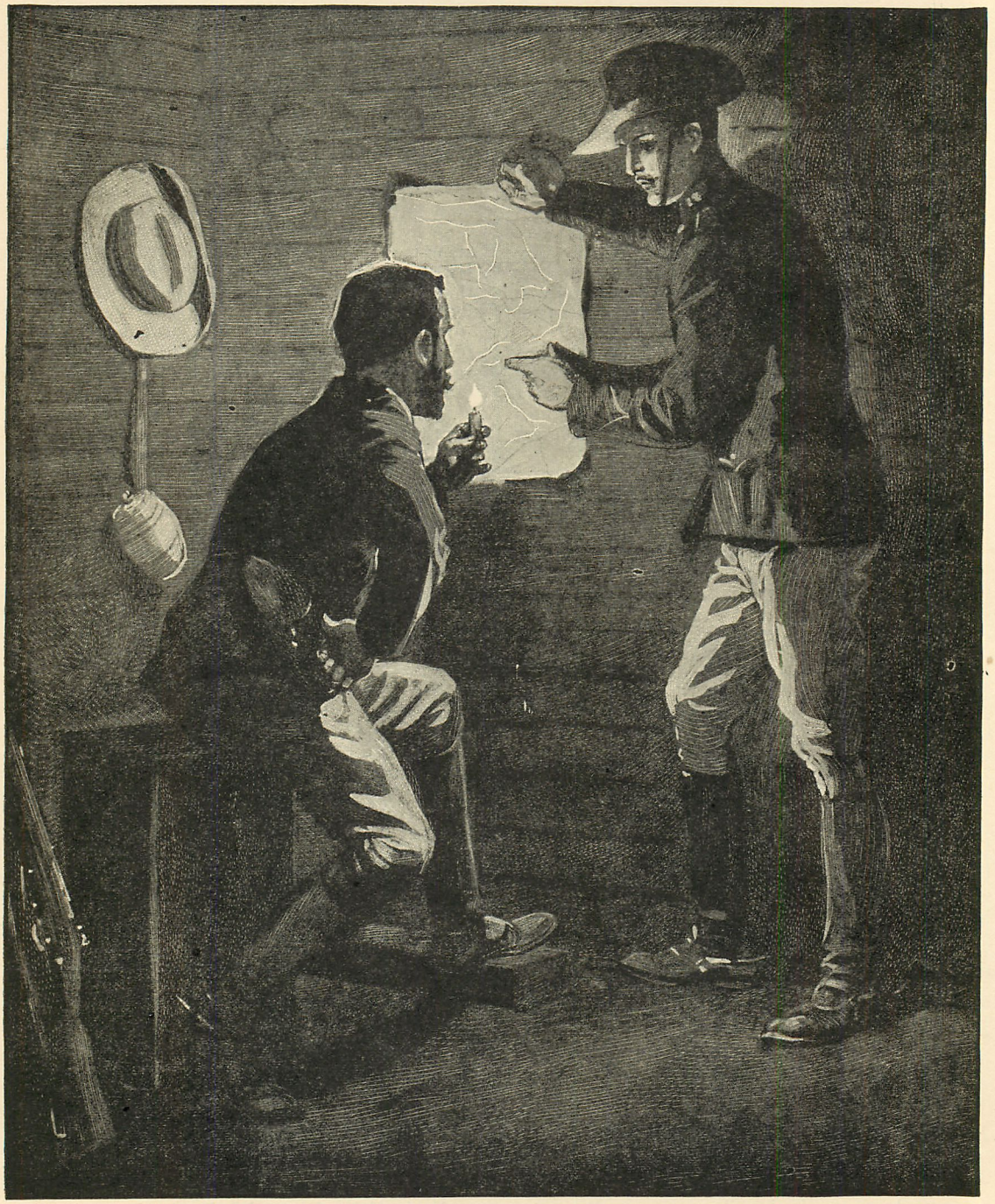
'You may take it from me,' said Vandeleur, 'that the story is absolutely true, and that I have not even exaggerated it.'

'Well, but,' murmured Ralph, 'go on, Vandeleur—what's the end of it? Where *is* the mine—tell us more.'

'It wasn't a mine, but there were other nuggets,' said Arthur. 'There's not much to be made out of it now, however, for I believe every scrap of gold has been found and collected. There were fourteen nuggets in all found in a square mile of the veldt, and after several years of research. Smithson was quite content with his half share in the profits—about a thousand pounds, which he laid out in further claims in the new Rhodesia. I delivered that first nugget to Miss Kiddersley, as she was then, and the acquaintance of my old friend's young sister became, I may say, very dear to me.'

'Vandeleur!' exclaimed Bobby, in much surprise—'but you are married!'

'Yes,' said Vandeleur, 'it so happened, you see, that Miss Kiddersley that was became shortly afterwards Mrs. Vandeleur. I shall have the pleasure, I hope, one day, of introducing you both to her when we all get back to dear old England.'



"I took Smithson into my confidence."

"He held the paper up to the fading light."

THE BASKET OF BOOKS.

(*Continued from page* 370.)

THERE was mourning and woe far and near around the old Castle of Wintoun when the King's messenger arrived with his escort of mounted men, bearing the heavy tidings that the good Earl, whom everybody loved, was to forfeit his life for the part he had taken in the Jacobite rising, and that in little more than a fortnight the sentence would be carried out

Up at the Castle the old porter and his wife served the new-comer, and helped him with trembling hands to wrap up the heavy volumes which he had been charged to bring to London with him; while down in the humble little lodge old Margaret Dunn wept her eyes out over the token of remembrance which had been delivered to her.

Her son John, a huge, powerful man in the prime of life, who had managed to escape on the dire day at Preston, stood beside her with despair upon his face, for was not the Earl his foster-brother?

'Better to have been taken and to die with him in London,' he groaned, 'than to be here helpless. Oh, these dogs of English! Eh! what did you say, Mother?—that Mistress Elspeth sent no message with it, save that the lackey said that the young lady told him that it was to be eaten at once?"

'Ah me,' moaned the old woman, 'how can I have the heart to eat it when the Earl, the lad that I brought up along with you, John, is to lose his head before the month is out?'

But John was not listening. Turning the cake over and over with a puzzled look on his face, he caught sight of a mark in the bottom of it, as if a piece had been taken out and then replaced. With one stroke of the hunting-knife which hung at his belt he cut it in two, and revealed the fact that the inside had been hollowed out, and in the crevice was a morsel of paper and some glittering gold pieces.

In an instant the man's whole demeanour changed. Over his somewhat stupid face came an alert, cautious look. Slipping the gold pieces into his sporran so quickly that even his mother did not notice them, he held up the paper to the fading light. He was an Earl's foster-brother, and he could read.

What he saw there seemed to satisfy him. Quickly he rolled it up into a pellet and hid it in the lining of his bonnet; then he turned to his mother, who sat over the fire, sobbing and crooning to herself. 'Take heart, mother,' he said, 'the Earl is not dead yet, and mayhap won't be for many a year. Mistress has sent more than the cake, and it behoves me to be stirring. More I need not tell—the less one knows the better in these days. But if ye dinna hear from me for a week or two, keep your mind easy, for your son John is hard to kill.'

Evidently the old woman had faith in this giant son of hers, who had been soldier, traveller, poacher in his day, for without a question she rose with alacrity, and, taking down a wallet from the wall, began to fill it with oat-cakes and cheese, while John, after looking to the priming of a pair of pocket pistols sat down calmly and ate a hearty meal of cakes and ale, flavoured by a goodly slice of Mistress Elspeth's cherry cake. Thereafter, with a tender farewell to the old woman, tenderer perhaps than most people would have given big John Dunn credit for, he opened the cottage door and slipped out into the darkness.

(*Continued on page* 390.)

SNOWED UP.

SNOW in the town falls only to be trampled into mud and slush and to make traffic in the streets uncomfortable.

Snow in the country means beauty and purity and dazzling whiteness. But snow on the mountains often endangers life, and causes much trouble.

Some of us, as children, have wept over Wordsworth's pathetic story of Lucy Grey, and the figure of the little girl who took a lantern and went to meet her mother coming through the snow—only to perish herself where the brook ran sullenly between whitened banks—will never fade from our memories. Lucy Grey dwelt on a moor; on higher ground still, cottages are sometimes entirely covered in snow, and there are drifts of many feet in depth.

The parents of four children who lived in such a house were once obliged to leave their home on business. It snowed when they went, and they cautioned the eldest, a boy of fourteen, and his sister, a year younger, to be sure to take good care of the little ones, and to sweep the garden path, that the way to the well might not get blocked.

John and Annie promised to attend to all this; their father and mother would be gone for three days, and they felt the importance of being left in charge.

On the third morning, when they awoke, they found it very dark; not a ray of light struggled through the little windows, and when they tried to open the door it would not move an inch. The sad truth flashed upon them that they were snowed up, and that a long time might elapse before outside help could reach them.

Then the boy and girl set themselves to work to make the best of their hard position. John cut and stacked a quantity of wood which he found in the lean-to behind the kitchen; Annie tidied the house, and put her little sisters to their knitting and reading. She cooked dinner, but was afraid to use much of the slender stock of provisions. 'We must make things last, John,' she said to her brother; and John, though he tried to whistle, and declared that the snow would soon melt, knew that she was right.

The hours passed slowly; the air in the buried cottage grew hot, and the place was close and stuffy. The children were tortured with doubts as to what had become of their father and mother; perhaps they too were overtaken by the storm, and might get lost and buried in the drifts. A whole week went by, and still brave John and Annie cared for the two little ones, and tried to keep up their own spirits. They were overjoyed when, on the eighth day, a rescue party came to dig them out. The roads had been blocked up, but now their parents were able to rejoin them, and all danger was over.

LITTLE OFFERINGS.

'MY offering is small,' said a beam to a flower,
'But I'll shine, if you like, on you just for an hour;
For the shower that's just over has drenched you so much,
And I think you will welcome my soft golden touch.'
So the flower spread its petals to welcome the light,
And its tint grew more lovely, and radiant, and bright.
Just to shine for an hour—'twas a small gift indeed,
But 'twas just what the blossom then happened to need.

'I can't help you much,' said the breeze to a lily,
'But the day has been hot, and the eve is so stilly;
You are covered with dust; so if I were to blow,
I think it would help you a little, you know.'
So the zephyr blew softly the dust all away,
And freshened the lily grown faint with the day,
And its little white cups once more were uplift—
Just a little breeze blew, yet how welcome a gift!

'It is only some crumbs that I must throw away,'
Said a child to a robin one cold wintry day.
'But if you are hungry, of them you'll be glad,
For you seem to be looking dejected and sad.'
And the bird took the offering—'twas simple indeed—
But it came in a moment of uttermost need;
And the robin, most grateful, gave back before long
A small stave or two of its very best song.

TAMING THE FERRETS.

Founded on Fact.

CHARLIE saw the rat-catcher take his locker of ferrets into an outhouse, place the box in a dark corner, shut the door, and leave the poor ferrets to their dismal quarters.

He was very interested in the ferrets. He had seen them hunting out the big brown rats from their holes in the barns: they seemed such pretty creatures, with long, lithe, furry bodies, and he felt it a disappointment that the rat-catcher would not allow him to handle them.

'They're dangerous, Master Charlie,' the man had said. 'They will fasten on to your hand without warning, and you might not be able to shake them off.'

Perhaps, Charlie thought, that was the reason their keeper kept them so closely confined, and only visited them twice a day to give them food. He just lifted the lid of their prison, thrust in their food, and left them alone again in the dark.

Charlie knew the ferret's story. The creature comes from the hot African hills; England is not its natural home, and should it get lost, or stray away, it seldom survives the cold. What a shame it was, Charlie thought, to shut the poor things up always in a dark box, when they had been used to a free and glorious open-air life in the African sunshine!

It was a wild idea that suggested itself to him then. Why not, he asked himself, try to make pets of the ferrets? The more he thought of this, the more eagerly he longed to make the experiment; and one night he put the matter before his father.

At first his father was alarmed. 'They're nasty things,' he said. 'They bite, and they kill poultry if they get loose.'

'Anyhow,' pleaded the boy, 'let me try, Father. I will build them a proper cage, and give them a court to run about in—the empty stable near the barn would make a capital place, if I may have it.'

Permission was eventually given him, though reluctantly, and Charlie set to work. He made a cage of two compartments, separated by a sliding door; one of the chambers was quite dark, and this he half-filled with straw; the other was fronted with open wire netting. This cage he placed in a warm corner of the stable, and from wall to wall he built a wooden partition about three feet high, thus giving the ferrets an enclosure in which to scamper to their hearts' content. The stable faced south, and the morning sun shone full through the open door for a few hours.

Into this court the ferrets were carried, and soon made themselves at home. Under their new conditions their health and appearance improved wonderfully. Twice daily Charlie carried them bread, crumbled up and steeped in milk, and the cook gave him bits of meat and scraps, while there was grain in plenty to be had in the barn.

It was a long time before he ventured to step over the partition, however. He stood hesitating, and longing to take the step day after day, until one afternoon, in a braver mood than usual, he clambered over.

The ferrets hissed at his descent into their midst, and arched their backs like cats, defying him with a fine show of ferocity. But Charlie did a brave thing: he dropped his hand in a swift swoop on the neck of the nearest ferret, and lifted it to his arm. He fondled and stroked it until it grew quiet, taking care to guard his unprotected fingers from a bite. To his delight the ferret grew composed, and allowed him to handle it without further protest.

He repeated this venture on succeeding days. He invented a peculiar cry of his own, which the ferrets learned to know and answer to; he kept back their food till they answered his call, and ran forward for their dinner. In the end he had the joy of conquering them as completely as if he were a born tamer of wild animals.

One day his father entered the farmyard, and he saw a startling sight. Charlie was seated on a log, with his ferrets scampering round him in the open yard. Some were penetrating a corn-stack in search of grain or mice.

'Boy, what *are* you doing?' his father cried. 'Why, you silly boy, you have let all the ferrets loose. They'll be among the poultry presently——'

'No, no, Father,' protested Charlie; 'they'll come to me the very moment I call them. Just see now!'

He gave a cry, the cry he had taught his pets to answer, and at the sound the ferrets came bounding to him. Mice, corn, recreation—all was abandoned in a twinkling, as they clambered up on the boy's knee.

Charlie turned to his father with a joyful laugh.

"The ferrets came bounding to him."

'It's much better for them, Father,' he said, 'than stowing them away in dark lockers where they never see the light.'

'Well,' his father exclaimed in surprise, 'this is a strange sight!' But I dare say you're right, Charlie. Hundreds of poor ferrets live and die in prisons less than a foot square. This is a revelation to me of what can be done, by a kind hand and heart, in taming such naturally ferocious creatures, and in making their lot happier.'

Cowper's Oak at Yardley Chase.

COWPER'S OAK.

THE famous old oak standing in the heart of a wood known as 'Yardley Chase' took its name from a blank-verse poem written by Cowper in 1791, while he was living at the Lodge, Weston Underwood.

There is a tradition that it was formerly known as 'Judith's Oak,' and was so named because, as legend says, it was planted by William the Conqueror's niece, Judith, Countess of Northumberland. If this be true, and the tradition is commonly believed in the parish, its age may be assigned to the time of the Norman Conquest, nearly eight and a half centuries ago.

Amongst Cowper's papers was found the following memorandum, undated: 'Yardley Oak, in girth feet 22, inches 6½.'

The tree is wonderfully suggestive of old age, and yet many of the branches bear fresh green leaves every year. It grows on the estate of the Marquis of Northampton, about two miles from Olney. To the tree is attached the following notice:—

'Out of respect to the memory of the poet Cowper, the Marquis of Northampton is particularly desirous of preserving this oak. Notice is hereby given that any persons defacing or otherwise injuring it will be prosecuted according to the law.'

It was necessary to put up this board; in past years the noble old oak has suffered from the knives and saws and other weapons of the tourists who injured it by engraving their names and taking away portions of a tree celebrated in song by Cowper. The photograph of it given here is by G. Sanders.

DEEP-SEA CABLES.*

I.—THE FLOOR OF THE SEA.

ONE of the strangest, yet commonest, facts in life was once told me by a lady. Her brother was ill away in Darjeeling, a place in the hills of India, and she was very anxious about him. She was living at Ventnor, in the Isle of Wight, and one morning her anxiety was so great that she walked into the Ventnor post-office and sent a message all the way to India to ask how he was. At four o'clock the same day, as she was sitting down to tea, the message came back to say he was better.

Just think! That message left the little Ventnor post-office, fled away along the telegraph lines and deep-sea cables, beyond France, beyond Spain, beyond the blue Mediterranean, beyond the Red Sea, under

* Next year's *Chatterbox* will contain a serial story, 'The Cruise of the *Kingfisher*,' dealing with an exciting cruise by a cable laying ship. These articles, by the same author show what wonderful work cable-laying is.

the great Indian Ocean, where the flying fishes dash over the waves, and then across the wonderful Indian continent; over rice-fields, along roads all sun-burnt and dusty, past forests where the elephants wander wild, and nullahs where the crocodiles lie waiting for their prey; on and on, up to the high green hills of Darjeeling, where it reached a house where the brother lay sick. And the answer came back all that long way, and reached the lady, as she was sitting down to afternoon tea, a few hours later.

For more than half that distance the message was passing along the deep-sea cables under the sea.

The deep-sea cables are perhaps the most wonderful things in the world; they connect lands thousands of miles apart, and form a network round the whole world; but to understand how they are laid, and all about them, it is necessary for you to know something about the deep sea itself.

Most people think that the bottom of the sea is just a great flat plain, but this is not so at all. If you could strip away the ocean, and leave the bottom of it dry, you would see a country that would astonish you, and maybe terrify you too, on account of its wildness and desolation. You would see vast plains of ooze, plains where no trees grow and no flocks wander; you would see ranges of great desolate mountains; you would see valleys, some of them far deeper than any valleys we see upon the earth.

Some of the mountains at the bottom of the sea are so vast that their tops appear above the water in the form of islands. The Canary Islands are simply the tops of a great submarine mountain-range; so are the Cape Verde Islands, and the islands of Ascension and St. Helena.

But there are numerous mountains and mountain-ranges under the sea whose tops do not appear above the surface. How, then, you may ask, do we know of their existence? Simply by the use of the deep-sea lead. If we take a sounding with the deep-sea lead in any part of the sea, and find a depth of, say, one thousand fathoms (two thousand yards), and if we take a sounding a little further on, and find only a depth of twenty fathoms, we know that the bottom of the sea rises towards the surface in that distance; in other words, there is a mountain under the sea just there. Conversely, the lead tells us the depths of the valleys.

Years ago a ship called the *Challenger* was sent out to explore the depths of the sea; it was the first great deep-sea expedition, and the most important. Since then the work has gone on without ceasing, and the result is that we now have maps of the bottoms of all the great oceans almost as complete as our maps of the land.

On the *Challenger* chart every sounding *more than three miles in depth* is marked as a 'deep.' Each of these 'deeps' is a great valley or depression in the sea's floor. Forty-three of them are known, twenty-four in the Pacific Ocean, three in the Indian Ocean, fifteen in the Atlantic, and one in the Antarctic Ocean. Three of these valleys are *more than five miles in depth.* Just off the coast of Japan occurs perhaps the greatest of them, the Tuscarera deep. If the water were suddenly stripped away here, and you and I were walking along the bottom of this great Tuscarera valley, craning our necks and looking up, we should see Japan, with the trees growing and birds singing away up in the sky five miles above us.

Let us now imagine the water quite gone from the Atlantic Ocean, and you and I standing at a certain point midway between England and America, on what was once the floor of the Atlantic. Around us lies a vast and desolate country, rocks and hills, and plains and valleys; over there on the sky-line is a volcano in eruption; America lies fifteen hundred miles away to the west, where the sun is setting, and Ireland fifteen hundred miles away to the east; the skeletons of old ships lost long ago are the only things visible in this fearful landscape that tell of human life, except just at our feet in the ooze a thing like a rope of wire—it is one of the Atlantic cables: a rope made of metal strands and indiarubber, carrying in its centre the copper wires through which the electricity passes from shore to shore.

It is three thousand miles long. Here, at our feet, it is half buried in the ooze, there it passes over ground strewn with rock, there it lies across the stern of a wrecked ship, and so it goes crawling over deep-sea hill and deep-sea dale, over wild mountain peaks and desolate valleys, till it reaches America.

An ordinary rope three thousand miles long would be an astonishing affair; but when we remember that a cable is a rope made up of nearly half-a-dozen parts: first, the core of copper wires in the centre, then the indiarubber covering over these, and so on, till we reach the strands of metel that form the outer covering, the astonishment becomes much greater. In the manufacturing of this three thousand miles of cable, every inch must be made with special care, so that no flaw may occur to let the electricity escape. And it only points out how weak what men call a very strong thing may be, if we remember that a boring worm, or teredo, a thing so small that a pill-box would seem to it a palace, will, if he can eat his way through the coats, render a cable three thousand miles long utterly useless.

(*Continued on page* 386.)

HELP.

MR. HENNIKER-HEATON tells a story of a little incident which helped to induce him to persevere in his endeavours to secure penny postage from Great Britain to the Colonies. A poor old woman once entered a village post-office with a letter which she desired to send to her absent son.

'It will cost fivepence to Australia,' said the postmistress.

And, needing her few pence for bread, the old woman was turning sorrowfully away, when a charitable bystander kindly took the letter, stamped it, and posted it for her.

Some months later the benefactor again found himself in the same post-office.

'Do you remember old Grannie Brown, on whose letter you kindly paid fivepence?' asked the postmistress, smiling.

The gentleman recalled the incident.

'Well,' she went on, 'the reply to that letter brought a big cheque from her son in Australia, and he has invited her to leave her poverty, and go out to live with him in every comfort.'

THE BOOKWORM'S OPPORTUNITY.

'COME along out with us, Edie,' said Hugh Clayton peremptorily to his sister.

'No shirking this evening, Bookworm,' cried Jim Clayton. 'It's much too fine for you to stick indoors. Do you hear?'

But no answer came from the big armchair where Edie Clayton sat curled up, quite forgetful of everything that was going on round her, for she was reading a more interesting book than usual.

Poor Edie was always wanting to read, but she was seldom left in peace, for one of her numerous brothers and sisters was sure to come to her for something. Now her book was suddenly shut up with a bang, while Jim and Hugh tried to drag her out of her armchair.

'Leave me alone, boys,' cried poor Edie, angrily. 'How can you worry me like this?'

'I say, Bookworm, what's making you so cross? I thought you could stand a little teasing,' said Jim. It certainly was most unusual for Edie really to lose her temper.

'If you only knew how I'm longing to go on with my book,' exclaimed Edie, trying to control her temper.

'But we want you to come and field for us,' said Hugh, in a very injured tone of voice.

'The children will do that for you, and love it,' Edie answered.

'Come along then, Hugh, and leave the bookworm in peace. She doesn't care a straw for us when she can get a book.'

Jim Clayton could not have tried a better method of gaining his point, for Edie, who was devoted to her brothers, exclaimed at once, 'Oh, Jim, how can you say so?' and, picking up her hat, declared herself ready to accompany them.

'Look here, you two are to leave Edie alone,' said another voice. It was Leonard, the eldest of the Claytons, who had been sitting unnoticed at the other end of the room.

'What business is it of yours?' muttered Hugh, half defiantly.

'I'm going to make it my business to see that you don't worry Edie too much. She is too nice to you by a long way.'

So Jim and Hugh took their departure, for Leonard was not a person to be trifled with. He had just spent his first term at a public school, and was now home for the holidays.

'Thank you for taking my part, Len,' said Edie. 'Perhaps, though, I ought to go with the boys,' she added, doubtfully.

'Rubbish!' answered Len. 'Why should you be at their beck and call? I will go and field for them presently.'

'How much nicer Len is since he went to school,' thought Edie, and returned to her book with a sigh of relief.

She read on till it grew dark. The servant brought a lamp and put it down on the schoolroom table, and then the children all came trooping in with a great noise and clatter.

'No more peace for me,' thought Edie, and she was right, for presently her little sister, Violet, who was sitting on the floor playing with her bricks, begged for her help over the building of a tower. Edie went down on her knees at once, while Jim mockingly remarked: 'Poor old Bookworm! What a shame to drag you away from your book.'

'Pity Len isn't here to tell Violet she mustn't worry you,' said Hugh.

The two boys were leaning over the table looking through their stamp-books, and they continued to tease Edie, though she refused to take any notice of their remarks.

Quite suddenly, Hugh grabbed at a stamp on the opposite side of the table; one of his feet caught in the fringe of the long tablecloth, and the next moment cloth and lamp were on the floor, on the top of poor little Violet. The lamp, which was of glass, was smashed, the cloth all soaked with oil caught fire, and the children screamed with terror as they saw the flames shoot up.

Hugh and Edie together dragged Violet from under the cloth, but, to their horror, her dress had already caught fire.

'Water! get water!' Hugh shrieked; but, while the others dashed in all directions, Edie caught up a heavy travelling-rug from the sofa and flung it round Violet. Then she rolled her over on the floor, and by the time the servants rushed in, had succeeded in crushing out the flames that would so quickly have burnt her poor little sister. Fortunately, the servants came in time to throw the rug on to the burning cloth, and the fire was soon stamped out altogether, but both Edie and Violet were made quite ill with the fright.

'You were splendid; simply splendid,' said Hugh the next day, when Edie, still rather white and shaky, came downstairs.

'How did you know, though, Edie, what was the right thing to do?'

'You see, I had just been reading about a fire in my book,' Edie answered. 'I read how a rug or something very heavy ought to be flung on top of the flames; but wasn't it queer that we should have had a fire directly after?' and Edie shivered a little.

'But were you reading that while we were playing cricket?' asked Hugh, anxiously.

Edie only nodded.

'It was bad enough,' said poor Hugh, sinking his head in his hands, 'to know that I was the cause of the fire, and now it seems that I—or Jim and I, at any rate—very nearly prevented you from saving Violet. Whatever should I have felt like?'

'Don't think such things, Hugh,' Edie begged. 'It was all an accident.'

'Dear old girl!' Hugh exclaimed, and added, enthusiastically: 'You're a regular heroine, and I will never, never again laugh at you for being a bookworm.'

'In fact,' said the mischievous Jim, who had been listening to the conversation, 'the best thing we can do is to insist on your reading from morning till night, so that you will know what to do in every emergency. Please begin at once.' Which remark made them all laugh.

But Edie was thinking, 'How glad I am to have had an opportunity of showing that my reading is some use after all.'

"She succeeded in crushing out the flames.

"He scarcely relished the King's joke."

THE PERFECT LIKENESS.

IT is related of Frederick the Second, King of Prussia, that he one day made a present of a golden snuff-box to one of his counts. When the latter opened the lid, he found the picture of an ass painted upon the under side of it. Though he scarcely relished the king's joke, he said nothing at the time, but as soon as he quitted the king's presence he sent one of his valets with the snuff-box to the city, and gave him instructions that the picture of the ass was to be painted out, and a portrait of the king put in its place.

A few days later a distinguished company dined with the king. The count was one of the guests, and after a time he produced his snuff-box and pretended to examine it with the air of a man who was proud to have received such a gift from the king. The latter, wishing to enjoy a little amusement at the count's expense, mentioned to the Duchess of Brunswick that he had made a present of the box to the count on the preceding day. She desired to inspect it, and when the box was handed to her she opened the lid, and, looking inside, cried in raptures, 'Perfect! the likeness is charming! It is one of the best portraits of you that I have ever seen.'

She handed the box to the person next to her, who was equally charmed with the likeness. From one to another the box was passed, and all testified to the excellent resemblance which the picture bore to the king. The king, thinking that the ass's head was still to be seen on the snuff-box, felt exceedingly embarrassed, and scarcely knew what to make of the incident; but at last the snuff-box, having made the tour of the table, came to his hands, and the first glance showed him how cleverly the count had anticipated his little joke and turned it against him.

THE STORY OF APSLEY HOUSE.

IT may be said that Apsley House, the Duke of Wellington's mansion at Hyde Park Corner, in London, is doubly a soldier's reward. King George II. was always pleased to meet with any one who remembered that he had fought at the battle of Dettingen, and one day when riding near Hyde Park he was saluted by a poor man walking at the roadside.

The King thought his face was familiar, and, on making inquiries, was gratified to find that he had been a humble comrade in the well-known battle. Noticing the man's condition, he asked if he could render him any service.

'Sire,' replied the old soldier, 'my wife and I secure a livelihood by keeping yonder apple-stall. If the ground on which it stands could be ours, we should indeed be in better case.'

It was not a very extravagant request, and the King granted it. Since then the value of land near Hyde Park has increased, and the old soldier's son received as much as four hundred and fifty pounds a year for the ground when a certain rich man chose the spot on which the apple-stall had stood as a suitable place to erect a stately mansion. This mansion was afterwards presented to the Duke of Wellington as a token of the nation's gratitude.

PUZZLERS FOR WISE HEADS.

ANSWER TO PUZZLE ON PAGE 354.

11.—1. Look before you leap.
2. Safe bind, safe find.
3. Waste not, want not.

DEEP-SEA CABLES.

(*Continued from page* 382.)

II.—LAYING AND MENDING.

LET us imagine that we are going to lay a cable between Ireland and America. The cable has first to be made,* and this having been done, it has to be packed on board a cable-ship.

Cable-ships are furnished with huge circular tanks. Each tank has a pillar in the centre; round this pillar the cable is coiled down, coil upon coil, till the tank is full. On deck there is an engine of an ordinary type, called the paying-out gear, which pulls the cable out of the tank and pays it out astern.

The ship having been loaded, we sail for the Irish coast, and attach the end of the cable to the point of land we have selected; then we turn the nose of the ship westward and steam away for America, paying out the cable behind us all the way.

I have already pointed out that there are mountains and valleys at the bottom of the sea, and this is where the chief difficulty of cable-laying comes in.

We are steaming along for America, paying out our cable at the rate of so many fathoms a minute. That is all very well as long as we are going over a deep-sea plain, but when our ship begins to pass over a range of submarine mountains or a valley, we have to pay out, maybe, three or four times as quickly, for, you see, to the same space of *water-surface* as in our last half-mile or so, we have in our next half-mile, maybe, three or four times the amount of *sea-floor* to cover, on account of those mountains or that valley.

Then, again, suppose we have two ranges of hills parallel and a valley between; if we do not pay out quick enough, we get our cable stretched between those hill-tops like a clothes-line between props, and it will break of its own weight, or a shark or big fish will strike against it and snap it.

You can see from this how necessary it is for a cable-engineer to know the floor of the sea well.

All the time we are making for America we keep an anxious eye on the barometer. Should a storm arise, it may be necessary to cut the cable, tie it to a buoy, and drop it overboard till the weather moderates. Then we would pick the buoy up with the precious cable attached, splice on to the cable in our tanks, and resume our course. Splicing is a tedious process, and is performed by a specially skilled man, for, of course, all the parts of each of the divided ends of cable have to be joined together, the copper wires in the centre, the indiarubber that covers them, and the galvanised wire coating outside.

Having arrived at the American coast at last, we put the shore end of our cable ashore, and the work is done.

* The wire-rope-making machine, by which cables are made, is described on pages 187 and 188 above.

This, of course, is only a bare outline of cable-laying, for the details would make a book, and, as for the worries and bothers and anxieties incident to the business, they would make two books.

The cable being well and duly laid, it lies at the bottom of the sea for years, and through it messages go to and fro between England and America till, one day, the telegraph operators find it will not work. Something has broken it somewhere in its course. It seems a hopeless thing to try and find the break in a cable three thousand miles long, but Lord Kelvin has devised an electrical means by which almost the exact position where the cable is broken can be ascertained. Knowing this, and knowing the line of the cable, we can make a pencil-dot on the chart of the Atlantic and say, 'The cable is broken *here*.'

A ship is sent out armed with grapnels and all the gear necessary. When she reaches the spot marked on the chart she takes soundings, finds the exact depth of the water and the condition of the bottom, whether it is rocky or made of ooze; then she puts down two buoys a mile or so apart, each anchored by a mushroom anchor, which is simply a huge mass of iron shaped exactly like a mushroom. The buoys are put down to give the ship a point to steer by; each buoy bears a flag and a powerful lamp, which is lit at night.

Now, the cable engineers know before putting down the buoys *almost* exactly where the broken cable is lying at the bottom of the sea. I say 'almost,' because it is impossible to say within a quarter of a mile or so; but when the buoys are down they can say for certain that *somewhere* between those two buoys the cable is lying.

The grapnel, a thing like an enormous three-pronged fish-hook, at the end of a rope, is now lowered till it reaches the bottom of the sea, and the ship steers slowly along, up and down, between the two buoys, dragging the grapnel along the bottom. The grapnel goes along the bottom of the sea, clutching at everything in its course—rocks, tufts of sea-weed, wreckage. Grapnels are almost like human beings, for they are always doing things they ought not to do, and nothing pleases a grapnel better than to get tangled in a wreck or jammed between rocks. However, after missing it several times, our grapnel seizes upon the cable at last.

When on board ship the engineers know, by certain signs (as, for instance, that the strain comes on the grapnel-rope slowly, and increases very gradually whilst the rope is being hauled in), that the grapnel has seized cable, and not rock, the engine which lowered the grapnel-rope is reversed, and the grapnel hauled up with the cable tangled in its prongs. This is the first part of the work.

We will suppose we have got hold of the American end of the broken cable. It is brought on board, tied on to a buoy, and then buoy and cable are flung overboard whilst we go and grapple for the English end. Having found that, we bring it on board and splice it on to the beautiful new cable we carry in our tank, then we turn the ship's head and steam back to the American buoy, paying out the new cable behind us; we bring the American end on board and splice it on to the new cable we have been paying out, then we throw the whole lot overboard, and the thing is done.

We have let a piece of new cable in between the broken ends of the old cable, and that is the whole theory of cable-mending.

(*Concluded on page* 406.)

KEEPSAKES.

O WHAT will you give to the day for a keepsake
Before it goes away?
Some act of kindness, some sweet word spoken,
A smile like a sunny ray.

O what will you give to the hours ere they vanish,
Just to remember you by?
Some loving deed that shall shine for ever—
O give this to them ere they fly.

DOORS, LOCKS, AND KEYS.

VI.—THE CASHMERE GATE AT DELHI.

DOORS that have played the most thrilling parts in the story of a nation are seldom to be met with, but many are historical, as the blowing up of a gateway is one of the chief points desired by a besieging force. Perhaps one of the most renowned doors in modern history is that of the Cashmere Gate, which guarded the northern entrance to the city of Delhi, defended by the mutineers in 1857.

Delhi being a town of vast size and importance, and a great force of rebel soldiers being concentrated therein, orders were given that it must be taken at any cost. The defences were very strong all around the city, both walls and gateways being of great thickness and height; but after long consideration, the Cashmere Gate was chosen for special attack. On the 8th of September, fifty guns began to play on it, and bombardment continued almost unceasingly until the 13th, when two practicable breaches in the walls were reported. As day broke on the morning of the 14th, the deafening roar of cannon suddenly ceased, and the 60th Rifles sprang out of cover, cheering loudly, to divert the attention of the besieged from the brave fellows to whom was allotted the dangerous task of blowing up the gate.

Home, of the Royal Engineers, led the first venture, and with a few men carrying powder-bags, crossed the ditch, laid their loads down in safety, and retired unhurt.

Next, Salkeld, also an Engineer, crept out, followed by a little party with four more powder-bags, whilst the leader carried a portfire or fuse for lighting the powder-train. By this time, however, the rebels were more observant, and grasping the significance of such a small advance, instantly opened a deadly fire from a wicket-gate only a few feet away.

The brave young officer saw the bags safely laid, but before he could use his portfire, fell back on the bridge, shot through an arm and a leg, but conscious enough to hand his lighting apparatus to Sergeant Burgess, bidding him fire the fuse. Burgess proceeded to carry out the dangerous mission in the very teeth of the muskets, but was shot dead; on which Sergeant Carmichael rushed forward, caught

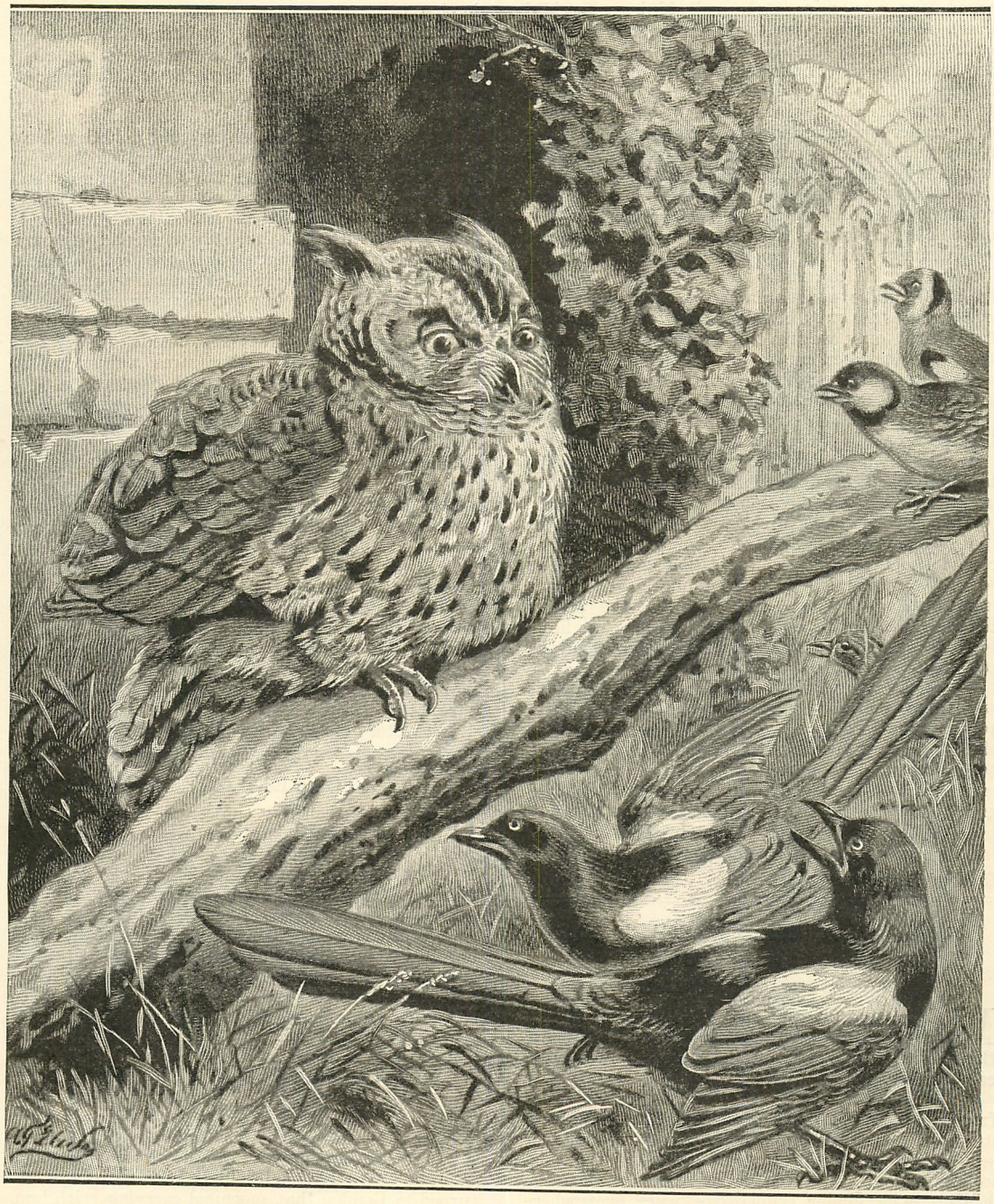
The Cashmere Gate at Delhi.

the portfire from his comrade's hand, lit the fuse, and fell dead beside him.

Thinking the fuse still unlighted, Sergeant Smith came to the rescue, but, finding it burning, threw himself over into the ditch, and it was well for him he did, for a moment later a terrible roar was heard, the massive gate was shattered to atoms, and with exultant cheers the storming party rushed into the city. For this splendid act of valour all the survivors were recommended for the Victoria Cross; but, alas! none of the chief actors in the tragedy lived to enjoy their honours. Burgess and Carmichael, as we have seen, died at the gate, Salkeld of his wounds, and Home met his death a few weeks later at the storming of an insignificant fortress.

Happily these brave fellows had not given their lives in vain, for, an entrance once gained into the city, John Nicholson, one of the men whose memory is dearest to his countrymen, led a brilliant attack, and after desperate fighting, Delhi was taken, and the chief stronghold of the mutineers wrenched from their grasp. Not, however, without a heavy death-roll was the victory won, and, leading his men through a narrow street below the ramparts, John Nicholson himself fell, mortally wounded.

He was one of the greatest, wisest, and bravest of the band of heroes who kept India for their Queen and country. His loss was acutely felt at a time when individual influence was so valuable, and a monument to his memory in the cemetery outside the Cashmere Gate is still an object of veneration to all who can appreciate valour, patriotism, and a keen sense of duty. Nicholson's name has become almost a proverb for courage among the natives.



"The plucky little birds attack it on all sides."

DEFYING THE OWL.

THE long-eared owl is found in nearly all parts of our islands. It is a lover of the woods, especially the fir-woods of Scotland, and during the day it sits dozing in the trees, where it is difficult to detect, because its dull, mottled plumage harmonises in colour with the wood and foliage by which it is surrounded. At dusk it rouses itself, and, dropping down from its perch, it begins to hunt through the

woods for rats, mice, and small birds. No bird could be better adapted to its mode of life than the owl. Its large eyes enable it to see well in the dark, its acute ears detect the least sound, and its large, downy wings carry it swiftly and silently to its prey. It is not surprising, therefore, that it is dreaded by the smaller animals and birds, which feel instinctively that this is a cruel and powerful enemy, for whom they are no match in the dark.

It very often happens, however, that an animal which is specially suited to certain conditions is more or less awkward, helpless, and sometimes even stupid under ordinary conditions. The ostrich, for instance, which can run as fast as a horse, cannot fly at all. The penguin, which swims like a fish, and captures its prey in the sea, not only cannot fly, but it can only walk very clumsily. The same truth is illustrated by the owl. Though it can see so well in the dark, it is blinded by the glare of the sun during the day-time, and though it still has its powerful beak and claws, it is nearly helpless, because it cannot see where to apply them.

It is a singular fact that many of the smaller birds, such as magpies, thrushes, and blackbirds, which have so much reason to fear the long-eared owl in the dark, have discovered its helplessness in the day-time, and a few of them will sometimes conspire to mob it, especially if they can catch it in some open space away from its hiding-place. It goes hard with the owl at such times, for the plucky little birds attack it on all sides, taking care, however, to avoid the blind and aimless blows of the owl's sharp beak.

The hooting cry of the owl in the day-time is sometimes sufficient to attract a mob of these little persecutors, and in bygone times, men who made it their work to catch birds were accustomed, it is said, to allure them by imitating the owl's cry. These men laid bird-lime upon the twigs of the bushes, and, hiding themselves from view, uttered an owl's hoot. The smaller birds gathered together in the bushes, ready to make a combined attack, and were caught by the bird-lime.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

True Tales of the Year 1807.

VI.—THE HISTORY OF MAIDA.

MAIDA VALE is one of London's busiest thoroughfares, yet how few of the many thousands who daily tread the street know how it came by its name.

Maida is a village in Calabria, about ten miles from Nicastro, just opposite the island of Sicily, and it is now a century ago since Sir John Stuart was sent to Calabria with a force of about five thousand infantry to support the King of Naples against the French, who, under Buonaparte, were everywhere bidding fair to conquer Europe.

The month was July, and the sun was scorching hot; the French, under General Regnier, were confident of victory, for not only was their force nearly double as strong as that of the British general, but also the soldiers, to a man, had a profound contempt for the British, their general having repeatedly told them that 'all the English were cowards, who had only to be met to be beaten.' General Regnier was one of Buonaparte's victorious generals; he had, however, never met the British in action, and had yet to learn how they could fight.

A looker-on, that July day, would doubtless have given the chances of victory to the French, for their force was mostly composed of veterans, bronzed and bearded, who had already taken part in many a war; whilst the force under General Sir John Stuart were mostly boys with smooth, ruddy faces, and just now they were suffering intensely from the heat, to which, as northerners, they were utterly unaccustomed.

Besides being in heavy marching order, each man was further encumbered with a big blanket strapped on to the top of his knapsack, making the weight almost intolerable. But there was the enemy in front of them, and each man was resolved to fight his best. After a few shots, the order came on both sides to 'advance with fixed bayonets.'

No time was lost in obeying this order, but there was now a second's delay on the British side, as the commanding officer suddenly gave a second command: 'Let go the blankets!'

The French general saw the delay, but mistook the cause. 'I told you so, men,' he cried, joyously; 'The British are cowards! They refuse to charge!'

The words were hardly out of his mouth, when the British force, freed from the impeding blankets, rushed forward with a mighty cheer, and the French, who had hitherto boasted, with truth, that no nation could withstand them, were driven back, the First Light Infantry, a very crack regiment, leading the retreat.

The victory of Maida was complete.

CAREFULNESS.

DURING a drenching shower, as a lady was one day returning home in a hansom cab, she saw a little girl running and crying, with something tucked under her wet frock. She signalled to the driver to stop, and, having invited the child into the cab, asked her the cause of her tears.

Carefully unwrapping her soaked garment, the child unrolled from it a new umbrella. She looked to see that it was dry, and then smiled at the kind lady.

'Thank you very much,' she said. 'I was so afraid my umbrella would get all spoiled and wet.'

THE BASKET OF BOOKS.

(*Continued from page* 378.)

IT was the eighteenth of February, and in six days Lord Wintoun was to suffer death on Tower Hill. Captain Carpenter, the King's messenger, had returned to London that morning, carrying with him, among other things, the great pile of books and papers which he had brought from Wintoun Castle, and which Mistress Elspeth had declared were necessary if her guardian was to settle his affairs before his death.

Had it not been that the Captain was very much in love with Elspeth, and also with the wealth

which it was supposed would be hers at her guardian's death, it is doubtful if he would have taken the trouble to bring the whole of them, for it is but just to say that they were grievously heavy. But the thought of the thanks which he would earn from the lady of his choice, made him particular about the matter, in spite of the grumbling of his men, and the great volumes lay safely in the hall of Lady Fortescue's mansion.

My Lady Fortescue herself was in a bad humour. In view of the shortness of the time that remained, passes had been obtained, through the influence of an old Whig friend, for Elspeth and Marian, with which they could visit their guardian, and Elspeth had also obtained permission for the books and papers to be taken to him, and taken backwards and forwards to the lawyers who were not allowed to visit him in person.

Herein lay the cause of her ladyship's displeasure. She had made up her mind to visit the Court that afternoon, when a reception was to be held, and naturally she decided to go in full state; but Elspeth had announced her intention of going to the Tower. 'Court functions were not for her at present,' she declared, and had requested the attendance of one of the lackeys to carry the volumes.

But Thomas and James demurred. 'They were not going to be made beasts of burden for all the rebel Earls in the world,' they said. 'Lord Wintoun had never been their master, and they would have nothing to do with his affairs now that he was in disgrace,' and there the matter stood.

Her ladyship stormed and argued, but Elspeth remained firm. She pointed out that it was absolutely necessary that these volumes should be conveyed to the Earl's cell, in order that he might make a due settlement of his affairs, and if these affairs could not be arranged, and the girls were left penniless, then the blame would lie on her ladyship's own shoulders. The dread of this happening made the old lady hesitate.

In the midst of their argument, James, one of the rebellious lackeys, entered. 'A man was in the hall,' he said, 'with some puppies in a basket, which he was desirous of showing to the young ladies in case they wanted to purchase one of them.'

Marian ran out of the room gleefully, but Elspeth followed more slowly. When she reached the anteroom she caught hold of her little sister. 'Marian,' she said earnestly, 'if ever you tried hard to do anything in your life, try to hold your tongue now. The man at the door is John Dunn, but you must not seem to know him. He has come to try and help me to save the Earl, and you can help too by being discreet.'

There was no time for more words, for they were in the outer hall now, where Thomas and James were standing admiring a beautiful litter of pups, which a stranger was offering for sale.

He was a man of tremendous height, with a clean-shaven face, which wore such a blank stupid expression that the serving-men whispered to each other that he looked very like a half-wit.

He had brought the little dogs in a huge wicker hamper, among plenty of straw, and seemed more taken up in attending to their comfort than in heeding the rude remarks of the men.

Little Marian, who had been promised a dog for her birthday present, stood half frightened, half confused. Surely Elspeth must be wrong, for big John Dunn, who lived at the lodge at home, had a big red beard and wore a kilt, while this man's face was bare, and his legs were covered with dirty old knee-breeches and stockings. She chose a puppy, holding fast to her sister's hand all the time, and Elspeth paid for it, and then called Thomas.

'Thomas, 'tis a pity that all the puppies are not sold,' she said; 'methinks this good man's hamper would have carried the papers, and then no one need be troubled, and both James and you could accompany her ladyship this afternoon when she goes, as she intends, to pay her respects at Court.'

The man took up the suggestion eagerly.

'In truth it would, Mistress Elspeth, and methinks the fellow might be glad to earn an honest penny by carrying them. He does not look as if he were cumbered by too much of this world's goods.'

When the scheme was mentioned to Lady Fortescue, she agreed to it readily, and so it came about that an arrangement was made with the man, that he should get rid of his dogs, and be at Fortescue House at four o'clock with his basket to carry the books to the Tower, while Elspeth, accompanied by Janet, drove thither in a hired coach.

During the drive Elspeth was very silent. Things had fallen out far better than she had dared to hope, but now that the die was cast and the plot was in train, her courage failed her.

'Oh, Janet' she said, laying her hand in that of her trusty waiting-maid, 'if we fail!'

'John Dunn is a right clever man,' said Janet, confidently.

In spite of her trouble Elspeth smiled to herself. Janet had long been proof against big John's wooing, but it seemed now as if absence had had its due effect.

At the entrance to the Tower, Elspeth went to speak to the officer on guard, while the stranger, who seemed to know his part without being told, set down his burden on the ground, and stood and waited for further orders with a look of intense stupidity on his face, while the soldiers crowded round him, laughingly asking him if he had a man inside, or what the huge hamper contained.

'Books,' he said shortly, 'for the young lady,' and as if to satisfy any further doubt, he raised the lid and let them see the ponderous volumes which it contained, along with the little iron box and the rest of the papers.

'He is a porter who is carrying the books and papers for me; can he wait there until I go and speak to the Earl? Mayhap his lordship would not like a stranger in his cell at such a time,' said Elspeth to the young soldier, whom she knew slightly, and her blue eyes looked so pleadingly up at him that the young man's heart was melted, and he answered courteously:

'Surely, Mistress, and I will see to it that you are not disturbed in your comings to and fro. I only wish it were not on so sad an errand.'

Elspeth thanked him and passed slowly on to her guardian's cell. A few minutes later she reappeared and beckoned to the man to follow her.

(*Concluded on page* 394.)

"She chose a puppy."

"The hair came away in his hand."

THE BASKET OF BOOKS.

(*Concluded from page* 391.)

A SOLDIER accompanied them to the door of the cell, and watched attentively while the hamper was opened and the books and papers piled on the table. He was trained to detect any signs between the prisoners and those who came about them, but here he saw nothing. Indeed, there was nothing to see. The Earl sat writing, his back to the company, and the man, after he had completed his task, stood in boorish silence while Elspeth gave him orders about coming to the entrance at the same hour on the morrow, in order to carry anything that the Earl might want to send to the house of the family attorney in Cheapside. Then he pulled his forelock clumsily and departed, leaving the Earl and his ward alone.

The next afternoon the same thing was repeated—only this time the man's errand was to carry the books and a few papers to the lawyer, and Janet accompanied him part of the way to point out the house, 'and to be sure,' as she remarked to her mistress in the hearing of the soldiers, 'that he did not make off with them.'

She walked a little in advance until they were some distance from the Tower and had fairly gained the bustling streets, then she slackened her steps until the big man came up to her. Then she slipped a sealed packet into his hand: ''Tis Mistress Elspeth's pearl necklace, John, in case you need more money. Doubtless you will find out where 'tis best to sell it. And she bid me say that you must arrange about a boat, for you can do it better than she can, and the attempt must be made on Tuesday night, John, for the execution is fixed for Thursday, and Wednesday might be too late. And John'—and here her voice sank so low that the giant beside her had to stoop a little to hear it—they had reached a quiet bit of street which was dimly lighted—'if you can do this, I'll—I'll marry you, John,' and slipping down a side alley the serving-maid vanished.

On the two succeeding nights the man was allowed to come and go without much notice being taken of him. It was evident to all that he came solely to carry the papers to and fro; apparently he took little interest in the prisoner; and when on Tuesday night Elspeth asked if he might go straight in with her, as her guardian's business was arranged and he wanted all the books and papers removed so as to leave his mind clear and undisturbed to prepare for his death, the officer nodded a careless assent.

In ten minutes the porter reappeared, his huge hamper as usual on his back, and he nodded a short 'good night' to the guards.

'My job is finished here,' he said; 'methinks the gentleman had a long will to make, for the books are wondrous heavy,' and as he passed under the archway there was a curious smile on his stupid face.

The hackney coach with the patient Janet inside waited long that night. It was fully an hour after the porter had passed with his burden, and a clock was striking six o'clock, when the mistress appeared, her cloak drawn over her face as if to shield it from observation.

'My guardian is very tired,' she said in a low, tremulous voice, as if choked with sobs; 'for pity's sake wake him not; he is worn out with the grief and sorrow of parting. I cannot bear to come back again and see him to-morrow; it but prolongs the agony.'

The jailer, moved to pity at her evident emotion, promised; and after a glance into the cell, just to satisfy himself that all was right, he locked it for the night. As he did so he glanced pityingly in the dim light at the still figure asleep on the couch, covered by a cloak of black velvet. 'He sleeps soundly,' he thought, 'for a dying man. May we all sleep as well when our turn comes.'

But in the morning, when he unlocked the door as usual to carry in the prisoner's breakfast, he was startled to see the figure still in the same position.

'Can he have died in his sleep,' he said to himself, 'or has the young lady smuggled in poison, so that he may escape the headsman's axe?'

He went up to the couch and laid his hand on the grey head, which was turned from him. The hair came away in his hand, and he started back in horror.

Then he shouted for his fellow-guards; and well he might, for it was but one of my Lady Fortescue's wigs which he held in his hand—she was noted for her elegant hair. And when the cloak was thrown hastily back it only revealed a pillow-slip cleverly stuffed with straw, which doubtless had been smuggled in, in the same hamper that the prisoner had been smuggled out in.

Under the couch was a neatly-arranged pile of books, which, on being examined, proved to be some old sermons printed in some unknown tongue. All the family papers of any value had disappeared.

Men were at once sent to Fortescue House to arrest Elspeth Wintoun, but here also there was consternation. Elspeth and little Marian, along with their maid, Janet Turnbull, had vanished during the night, leaving no trace behind them, although it was supposed that a groom named Walter Stewart, who had been in their service in Scotland and who had been lately seen hanging about the doors, had aided their flight.

My Lady Fortescue was in an ungovernable rage; not only would the affair create a scandal in which her name must unavoidably be mixed up, 'but what was she to do,' she asked her trembling waiting-maid, 'without the best and most natural-looking wig, which had cost ten pounds and which could not be replaced, seeing that the little French barber who had made it had died.'

Nor was her fury anything appeased when, a few weeks later, a new wig arrived in a box, none the worse for a long journey, accompanied by a letter from Elspeth, thanking her for the use of the old one, and adding that neither her little sister nor herself would have need of her hospitality in the future, as they would continue to reside, as they had hitherto done, with their guardian, the Earl of Wintoun, who intended now to live in France.

E. W. GRIERSON.

IT is better to deserve honour and not win it than to win it without deserving it.—*Old Proverb.*

A DAISY CHAIN.

I PLUCKED some little daisies
That blossom'd in the sun,
And with a dexterous finger
I wove them one by one;
I threaded them right carefully,
And soon had, for my pain,
A string of silvery blossoms,
A pretty daisy chain.

I did some little kindnesses
That any one may do,
I spoke some sweet and simple words,
That helpful were and true;
I linked them in sweet service,
And when together wove,
They made a chain most beautiful—
A golden chain of Love.

RETURNED BY THE SEA.

DOUGLAS finished cutting the last letter of his name upon the wooden railing of the jetty. The jetty was a small pier which ran out into the sea by the harbour at Broadsea. Douglas looked at his work with satisfaction, then shut down the blade of his pocket-knife. The letters he had carved in the wood were not very even, but then, the knife was rather blunt. Yet, jagged and worn as the blade was, Douglas prized his old knife above all his other possessions. His father was a sea-captain, and before he had started upon his last voyage he had given his little son the knife, and Douglas had said he would be able to show it him when he returned home again.

Still holding his knife in his hand, the boy looked over the jetty into the sea. Just at that moment another boy ran past him, and in doing so accidentally gave his arm a push. Douglas had not noticed him coming, and in his start of surprise he dropped the knife into the sea.

He was filled with consternation and grief when he realised he had lost his beloved gift. For a few moments he gazed into the water almost as if he would spring after his treasure. Then he turned and ran along the pier to his mother, who sat waiting for him on a seat near. To her Douglas told his woe, and she did her best to console him, telling him she would explain it all to his father, and let him know it was through no carelessness of his that the knife was lost. Then she promised to buy her little son a new knife. But Douglas refused to be comforted, and declared he did not want any other

In the afternoon he begged to be allowed to go on the beach, filled with a dim hope that the sea might restore his treasure to him. When he arrived upon the sands the tide had come in, and the first thing he saw was a gentleman looking at some object he had evidently just picked up. Another boy was standing near, and as Douglas went to them he heard the gentleman say, 'I suppose this knife doesn't belong to you, my lad, does it? The sea has washed it up. Some one must have dropped it from a boat, or off the pier. Were you looking for anything?'

The boy glanced eagerly at the knife, and a sly look came over his face. 'Yes, sir, please,' Douglas heard him reply; 'it's my knife. I came down here on purpose to see if it would get washed up. I dropped it over the pier.'

By this time Douglas was right up to them, and could see that the knife which the gentleman was holding was no other than his own lost one. He was amazed at the cool way in which the other boy told the lie that claimed it as his, and for a moment he remained silent, joy at seeing his treasure mixed with the dread and fear of not being able to get it back into his keeping. Then, with flushed face, trembling with eager excitement, he went boldly up to the gentleman.

'I beg your pardon, sir,' he said politely, and as quietly as he could, 'but that knife belongs to me. I was cutting my name on the jetty this morning and I dropped it into the sea. It is one my father gave me before he went away, and I told him I should keep it safely until he came home. I have always taken care of it, and should not have lost it to-day, only some one happened to knock my arm suddenly; it made me start, and the knife dropped from my hand. Oh, sir! please give it back to me; I care for it more than anything I have ever had.'

The tears came into Douglas's eyes as he pleaded for his treasure. The gentleman looked at him kindly and searchingly, and then turned to the other boy, who now stood with his eyes fixed defiantly upon Douglas.

'You both claim the knife,' said the gentleman; 'whom am I to believe? Do you still say it is yours?'

'Yes, sir,' answered the other boy, doggedly.

'Oh!' cried Douglas, laying his hand upon the gentleman's arm entreatingly; 'it is my knife; he cannot want it as I do. Father gave it me. Please believe me!'

The gentleman again glanced keenly at the two boys. Then a thought seemed to strike him, and putting his hand into his pocket he drew from it a bright new clasp-knife. This he laid in his palm beside the old, shabby, and now rusty one Douglas had lost. Then he held out the two before the boy who had said the knife was his.

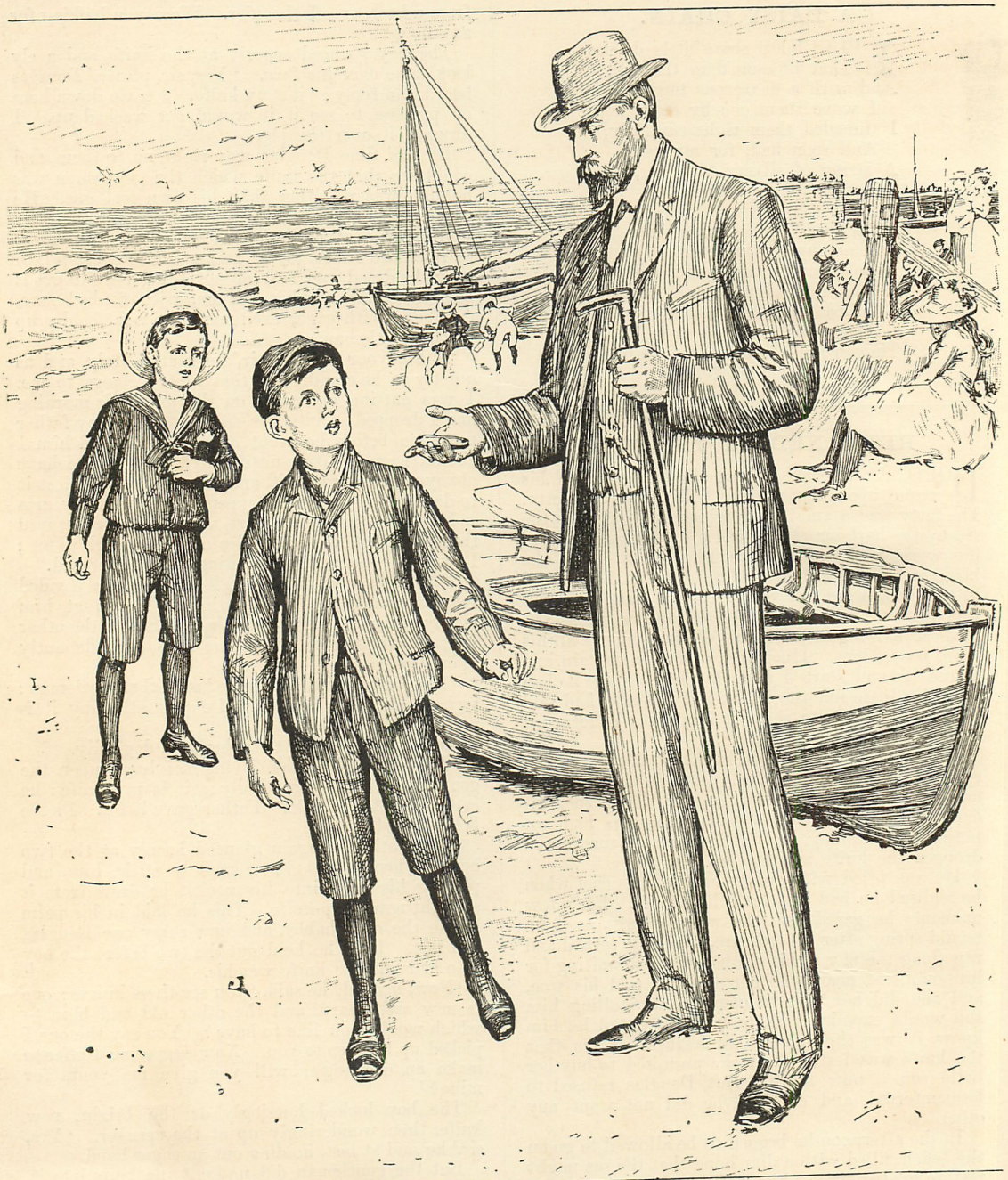
'Now, my lad,' he said, 'you see these knives; one is new and sharp, and the other old and blunt—which would you like to have? You say the one I picked up belongs to you. Now supposing I offer to make an exchange; will you give me yours for mine?'

The boy looked longingly at the bright, new knife, then wonderingly up at the speaker. 'Yes, sir,' he said at last, holding out an eager hand.

But the gentleman did not put the knife into it. He glanced at the lad with an expression of disgust and turned to Douglas. 'And you, my boy,' said he; 'would you agree to an exchange of property?'

'No, no!' cried Douglas; 'give me my old knife. It is the one Father gave me, and I want no other. Let him have the new one if you like, but give me mine.'

The gentleman smiled kindly, and placed the lost



"'I suppose this knife doesn't belong to you, my lad?'"

treasure in its owner's hand. 'There you are,' he said; 'I know now that your story is true, for had it not been so, you would rather have had the new knife. But I see you value this old one for the giver's sake. And you,' he continued, turning to the other boy, 'you have told a lie and tried to obtain what was not your own. For the future, try and be truthful, remembering a lie is sure to be

found out, and will make you unhappy and despised. Take care of your knife that the sea has given back to you, my boy.'

The last words were addressed to Douglas, who, with repeated thanks to the finder of his gift, ran joyfully home with his good news, leaving the other boy to turn away, bitterly regretting his falsehood.

THE 'CHATTERBOX' BICYCLIST.

A STRANGE costume was seen at the meeting of a well-known London bicycle club not long ago. The wearer was clothed in *Chatterbox*. On his body was a large cardboard box, pasted over with coloured plates taken from *Chatterbox*. The borders of the pictures were strips cut from the headings of

Chatterbox
Chatterbox
Chatterbox

THE MISSISSIPPI JETTIES.

AFTER flowing for a distance of nearly four thousand miles the Mississippi River grows tired and lazy. The mountains and forests have all been passed, and the last of the many cities that flourish upon its banks has been left behind. There seems to be nothing else to be done, so, about fifteen miles from the Gulf of Mexico, the mighty river splits itself up into a number of streams, which flow slowly to the sea in different directions. Now the Mississippi River has not rolled along for such a distance without picking up something on the way, and by the time New Orleans is reached, in southern Louisiana, the waters contain a large quantity of mud and sand and mineral 'silt.' While the stream flows rapidly this matter flows with it, but, as soon as languor and laziness begin, down it all sinks to the bottom. The consequence is that, with the passage of years, this deposit has risen higher and higher from the bed of the stream, until the stream itself has been obliged to break up into a number of smaller ones. And when you are told that in one year the river thus carries down enough soil to make a mass one mile square and two hundred and sixty-eight feet thick, you will wonder how it is that the whole of North America has not already been washed into the Gulf of Mexico. As it is, the river-mouth, or delta, now extends some miles into the sea—a vast tract of flat and dreary mud-banks. Every year the great floods add to this, and the entrance to the Mississippi became so difficult to navigate that the Government at last found it necessary to take measures for improving it. In 1875 they adopted the suggestions made by Mr. James Buchanan Eads, a celebrated engineer, and he was asked to open the mouth of the Mississippi.

Out of the many channels through which the main stream seeks the sea, there are three larger than the rest. One of these flows south-east, another south, and the third south-west. They are called Passes; and Mr. Eads chose the central or south pass as the one most suitable to work upon, though it was the smallest. At the point where it left the main stream it was only fifteen feet deep, and at its other end it flowed into the sea over a sandy bar that rose to within eight feet of the surface. This was a very poor gateway to the United States, and certainly did not do credit to the majestic river.

Mr. Eads pointed out that the proper thing to do was to wake the Mississippi up, and compel it to open its own gate. 'If we dig the mud away,' said he, 'it will only settle again; but if we make the current of the water strong enough to *wash* it away, it will not be allowed to collect any more.'

The Government acknowledged that this sounded reasonable; so, one day in 1875, a large body of workmen arrived on the muddy shores of the South Pass, and operations began. The spot chosen was some two miles from the sea. The shallow, languid waters of the South Pass were two miles wide, and in order to strengthen the current Mr. Eads had decided to contract this width to one thousand feet. To accomplish this it would be necessary to build two long jetties, or embankments, one thousand feet apart, stretching out into the gulf. To mark the line these jetties were to take, two rows of long piles were driven into the water till they looked like garden palings, two and a quarter miles long, and some eight or ten feet apart. Those on the western side of the channel, however, only extended over a distance of one and a half miles, though both reached the sea on the same level.

While this was being done, a number of men, accompanied by barges and steamers, had made their way to a little distance, where large quantities of willow-trees grew. Wading through the soft mud to these trees, the men cut from them bundle after bundle of willow-wands, each from fifteen to thirty feet long, and about two and a half inches thick at the larger end. Each barge, on receiving a full load of these, was towed back to Port Eads (as the cluster of workshops and houses was called), where the wands were quickly made into 'mattresses'—mattresses for the bed of the Mississippi. And this is how they were made: On an extensive platform which sloped to the water a number of pine planks, twenty to forty feet long, were placed side by side, about five feet apart. Through them wooden pins about two feet long were driven. At right angles to the planks, and between these protruding pins, bundles of willow-wands were laid and pressed tightly down. These were followed by another layer of wands placed in a line with the planks, and so on, until the mattress was built up to the thickness of two feet. Then, to the ends of the protruding pins, a fresh lot of strong planks was tightly fastened, and the mattress was ready for use. Ropes were securely tied to it; a steam-tug dragged it from the sloping platform and towed it to the line of piles, where it was sunk to the bottom of the river, heavily weighted with rubble and small stones. It was possible to make and launch a mattress in two hours.

In less than twelve months, the jetties, though not complete, had had such an effect upon the current that large quantities of the mud had been swept away, and Mr. Eads' friends came down on the *Great Republic* steamboat to see how he was succeeding. But, unfortunately, his enemies came down too, and spread a false rumour abroad that, though some of the mud had been cleared away, the river had only dropped it again a few yards beyond the place where the jetties ended. These enemies were the people who had been against the use of jetties, and their object was to prevent Mr. Eads obtaining help in the form of money from the public. The Government would pay him nothing until the South Pass was quite clear. But Mr. Eads had a friend who won success for him when he almost feared defeat. This friend was Captain E. V. Gager, of the steamship *Hudson*, belonging to the Cromwell Line. He begged that he might be the first to have the honour of sailing his ship between the jetties; and the pilot of the Mississippi delta telegraphed to him in New York one day in May, 1876, that, in spite of all rumours, the channel was clear. Captain Gager received this information just as the *Hudson* was starting for New Orleans. We can guess how eagerly they watched at the jetties for the coming of his ship, and with what delight they greeted the appearance of her flag in the Gulf of Mexico. The

pilot and Mr. Eads went out to meet her, and informed Captain Gager that there was an average of fifteen feet of water in the channel, but that the tide was falling rapidly. Delay would have spoilt all; and, though fifteen feet was only just deep enough for his ship, Captain Gager steered courageously for the jetties. Surely no ship was better named. Like Hudson, eager to sail in unknown waters, and like Cromwell, ready to break down all barriers, she swept up the middle of this new Mississippi with a line of white foam at her prow, and a few minutes later dropped anchor in the deep water at Port Eads. The *Hudson* was an iron ship of one thousand eight hundred and seventy-two tons, and she carried a cargo of commonplace merchandise for New Orleans; yet on that day, to the engineers of the South Pass Jetties, she was an argosy freighted with gold; for she had won them a nation's confidence, and with confidence came offers of monetary help. One act of friendship had thwarted a hundred schemes of the unfriendly, and Mr. Eads completed his great work free from the old anxiety.

As the willow mattresses settled more firmly down others were laid upon them, until the surface of the water was reached, and over all heavy stones were placed. At the sea end, owing to the force of the waves, the jetty-tops consist of enormous blocks of concrete, some weighing as much as two hundred and sixty tons. These were made in the position they occupy, the concrete being poured into moulds and allowed to dry.

Twenty-six years have elapsed since the jetties were finished, and the Mississippi, roused at last to a sense of its duty, runs in a channel thirty-one feet deep into the Gulf of Mexico, where the soil and sand it has collected from the continent are distributed far and wide by ocean currents.

USEFUL KNOWLEDGE.

A TRAVELLER stood beside a river pilot, admiring the skill with which the vessel was guided through narrow channels and amid treacherous sandbanks and shoals.

'How long have you been piloting here?' at length he asked.

'Twenty-five years and more.'

'Well, now, I suppose you know every bank, rock, shoal, and dangerous place?'

'No, I don't!' said the pilot.

'You don't!' ejaculated the passenger. 'Then, are you fit for your work? What do you know?'

The pilot smiled. 'I know where the deep water is,' he said.

It is better to know the safe course than to be able to see all the dangers.

BETTY'S CHRISTMAS PRESENT.

BETTY was very busy. She always was at Christmas-time. It was hard work to make a shilling buy presents for every one. Yet Betty never left any one out. The other children might declare they hadn't enough money to buy Christmas presents. Betty never did. 'It is because Betty was born on a Wednesday that she is always giving people things,' her brothers explained. 'Wednesday's child is loving and giving.' For days and weeks before Christmas her clever little fingers were busy. Her mother owned almost more pin-cushions and needle-books than she could count.

Betty even gave presents to her dolls. She had a large family of them, but for the most part they were old and broken; yet she loved them dearly. Betty had two brothers and a father and mother, and as she counted her mercies, she felt herself passing rich, and her heart ached with sympathy for a certain solitary old gentleman who lived opposite to her. He was reported to be very rich. 'But what did that matter,' Betty thought, 'when he had nobody to love him?'

On Christmas Eve, Betty always wrapped up her presents in the nursery. Just as she was finishing she looked up and saw the lonely old gentleman, as she called him, coming out of the house opposite. He looked even graver and sadder than usual. Suddenly a thought came to Betty. She seized a white china dog which she had once bought, and of which she was very fond.

'It must be dreadful for him to have nobody to give him Christmas presents,' she thought. 'Suppose I took this to him.' For a moment she hesitated, for she was a very shy child. 'It will be dreadful to go to that great house alone.' Then her generosity overcame her fear, and without even waiting to put on her hat, she seized the dog, ran downstairs, across the road, and up the steps of the opposite house.

The footman who opened the door looked at her in surprise. But Betty pressed the dog into his hand. 'Will you please give this to the lonely gentleman to-morrow, and wish him a "Happy Christmas" for me?'

Before the man could protest, Betty had run away.

The next afternoon Betty was sitting alone in the nursery. If the truth must be told she was a little sad; for the excitement of giving her presents was over, and the boys were out. Downstairs, Mother was occupied with a visitor.

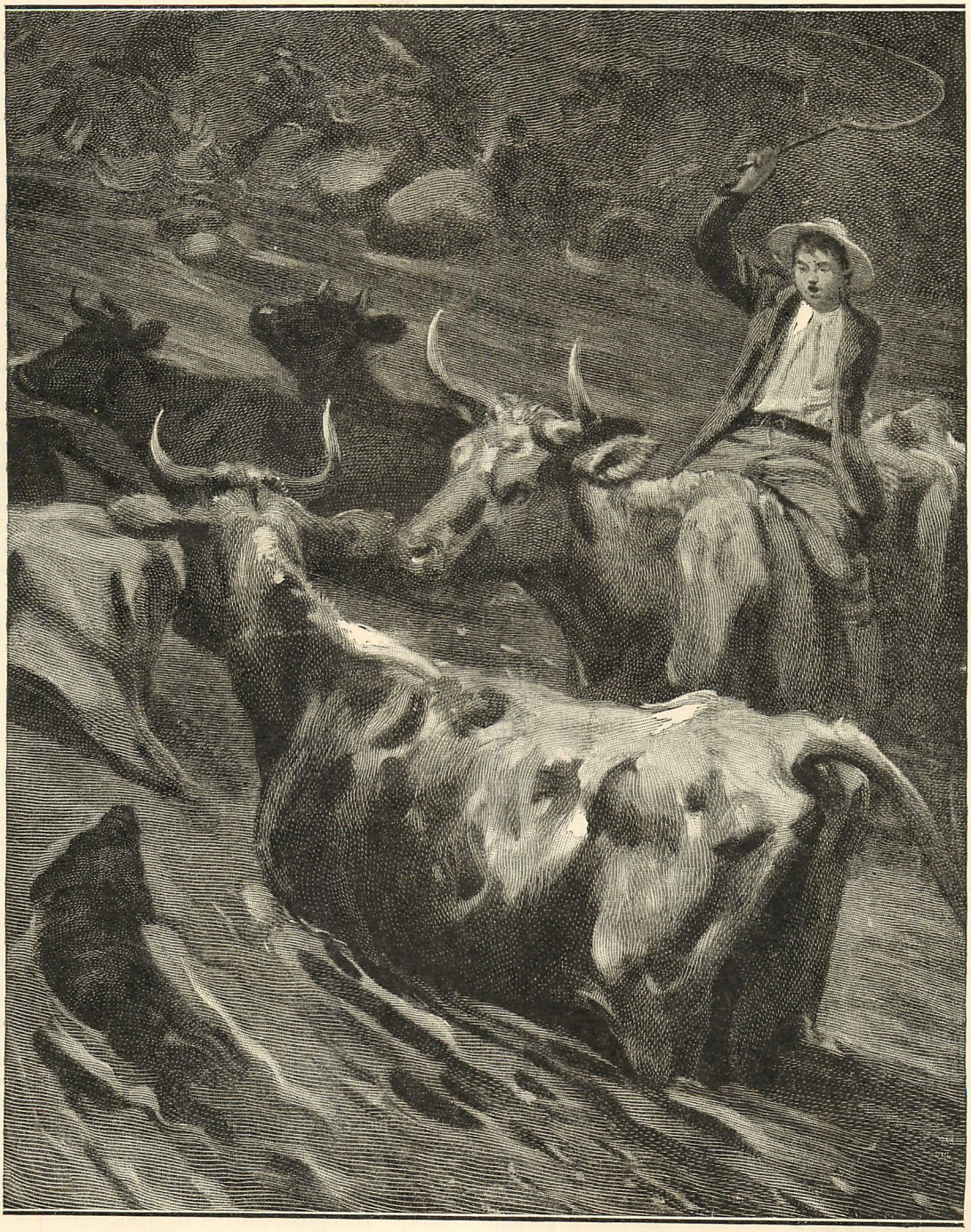
Suddenly she saw the door of the opposite house open, and the 'lonely old gentleman' come out. Much to Betty's surprise, he crossed the street and rang the door-bell of her house. Without hesitation Betty ran downstairs and opened the door. 'I'm so glad to see you, for I'm all alone,' she cried.

Suddenly the old man bent down. 'Are you?' he said. 'People don't often say that to me. I've come to thank you for the first Christmas present I have had for ten years.'

'Yes,' Betty answered, 'I thought you would like Toby. You see I knew you had no little girls of your own to give you presents. Will you come up to the nursery now?' she continued.

That evening when her mother came up to Betty's room to say 'good-night,' her little girl threw her arms round her neck. 'Oh, mother!' she said, 'I did have such a nice afternoon, and do you know "the lonely old gentleman" once had a little girl, and he says I must often come and see him, for I remind him of her; he doesn't feel lonely any longer, because I am to be his friend.'

"'Will you please give this to the lonely gentleman to-morrow?'"



"His long whip struck out at the nearest animal."

A STRANGE RIDE.

Founded on Fact.

IN South Africa there are rivers which dry up almost completely in the dry seasons, their bed being only dotted here and there with an occasional pool. But when the 'river comes down' in the autumn, it comes with a rush and a roar; at first a foot high, a minute later it is higher still; five minutes later it has become a flood, carrying all before it.

Jacques Hildfried was the farmer's boy whose business it was to round up the cattle on a farm near the Orange River, and one autumn night he was driving his herd across the dry river-bed. Out on the parched sun-dried earth around the heat was intense, but down in the river-bed it was cooler, and Jacques yielded to the inclination to rest awhile among the pools. The thirsty cattle, too, seemed glad of a draught of the cool water, and a browse among the grass that grew in the shadow of the steep southern bank. There was no great hurry, Jacques thought, but he did not observe the dark clouds in the distant eastern sky, that had just deluged the country up the river with floods upon floods of rain.

He sat idly looking into a pool; he saw the water stir—it joined company with the water in the next pool—it rose and leapt on to a larger pool beyond. A swirl of water suddenly grew about his boots, then he looked up-river in alarm: the flood was coming down!

'Hi, hi, hi!' he screamed, leaping up to drive his cattle to the bank, and calling to his dog. 'Round 'em up, Spot, quick! Bess, you stupid animal—and Depper—come back!'

But the beasts did not seem to comprehend more than that some accident was supplying them with an abundance of water to drink; they stood knee-deep in the flood, gazing ahead at the unusual sight, with Jacques plunging frantically through the rapidly growing stream to head them back.

His good dog, Spot, having memories of similar previous occasions of peril, sprang into the advancing tide, swimming and barking vigorously, but eventually the flood tossed him to the bank like a cork. Jacques felt the water pushing him back, bearing him down; already they were up to his coat-tails. Up the stream a greater volume of water was threatening. He steadied himself with his hand on the side of a favourite beast in the herd, then he leapt upon its back and screamed out:

'Hi, hi, hi! Round up, round up, Spot!' His long whip struck out at the nearest animal, and at that moment a tremendous crack of thunder helped him: it frightened the herd into movement. Down came the rain in sheets; mists of spray arose from the banks where the rain pelted on them, the river was thick with dancing bubbles.

But through the blinding rain and spray the boy saw his cattle stumbling up the defile opposite the farm, and the beast he rode was frantic to follow. Up the bank it carried him, lifting him out of the flood, driving the rest before it. The summit gained, Jacques leapt nimbly off and made a dash for the farm premises. His master, rushing out to help, turned aside just in time to avoid the stampeding cattle.

'That was a narrow squeak, master!' cried Jacques, trembling, as he encountered him.

'Yes, lad!' his master shouted through the storm. 'Keep your eye on the sky when the season is changing is good advice in these parts, and we were foolish not to watch the clouds. But I'm glad you're all right, Jacques. The cattle will find their way to shelter now by themselves.'

A TRIP ON AN AVALANCHE.

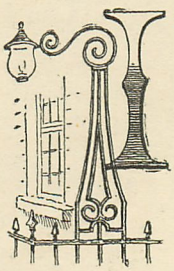
A True Story.

AN avalanche is a large body of snow or ice sliding down a mountain, and sweeping everything before it. It is something like a landslip, such as some of you may have seen when you have been staying at the seaside, where the cliffs are crumbling away; but an avalanche is very much bigger than landslips of this description.

Two wood-cutters were descending the San Joris mountain on their sledge laden with wood, when they observed cracks appearing in the snow on either side of them, and knew that they had started an avalanche.

At first they enjoyed their novel experience of riding on an avalanche, and made jokes about their increase of speed, until they suddenly found that the snow had diverted its course, and was carrying them in the direction of a precipice. The man who was standing behind the sledge, steering it by means of a long pole, immediately threw himself into the soft snow at the edge of the moving mass, calling on his companion to follow his example. Both men escaped with bruises, but the sledge disappeared over the precipice, and no trace of it was ever found.

WHAT HIS FATHER COULD NOT GIVE HIM.



IT was Jim's birthday! That was his first thought when he woke: his second was, 'What will they give me?'

He was not down late to breakfast that morning, and, as he caught sight of the two or three parcels by his plate he brightened up, just like a boy who had seen the sea for the first time.

'Just what I wanted, Father! Thanks!' he said, as he undid a new fishing-rod. 'And you, too, Mother,' as he turned out a splendidly bound book from its wrappings; 'and oh! what a ripping knife you girls have given me! It's jolly kind of you all.'

His father, meanwhile, had been opening his letters, and one of them made him look at Jim and frown. He opened his lips to speak, and his wife, who knew that look upon his face only too well, began to feel nervous, for, glancing at the letter that upset him, she saw that it was Jim's report from his school. However, his father thought better of it

and said nothing till breakfast was over, then he suddenly exclaimed, 'Jim, I want to speak to you.'

'Yes, Pater,' said Jim, cheerfully, opening and shutting the fishing-rod, as he followed his father to the study.

'Jim,' said his father, gravely, 'I am sorry I have not been able to give you some of the things I should have liked, but I can't do it.'

Jim opened his eyes with surprise. 'Why, Father, that rod's just the thing!'

'I know, my boy, I know; but I should like to have given you something better, only I couldn't.'

'Couldn't you afford it, Dad?' Jim suggested, as the only reason he could think of.

'If I were as rich as Andrew Carnegie, I couldn't give you what I wanted to. It is out of my power.'

Jim stared, puzzled. 'What *do* you want to give me?' he questioned.

'Knowledge,' answered his father. 'Power to stick at work and your lessons. Look at this report.' As Jim looked he saw that opposite nearly everything was written 'Careless,' and he hung his head.

'You see,' said his father, 'I can't give you knowledge and carefulness as I can give you a fishing-rod. You will have to work and get them yourself. No one can give them you. You are thirteen years old to-day, and so far as I can see you have given yourself very small presents. It is precious little you know and precious little you work. Don't you think you had better give yourself a little more? Run away and think about it, Jim.'

Jim did. He saw the force of it, and began to work in such a way that the next report he gets will certainly be a better one.

DIAMOND CUTTING.

DIAMONDS have been obtained from many parts of the world. They are found thinly scattered among soil which has at some time or other been brought down from higher ground by water, and they are separated from the soil in which they lie by sifting or by washing it.

First, let us see what the diamond is like when it is picked out of the mud or soil in which it is found. It is a little glittering stone, which has a number of tiny flat sides or facets arranged with more or less regularity—a crystal, in fact. The forms of the diamond crystals vary through a series of shapes which may all be formed from one simple type. If we take two little blocks of wood, each of which is the shape of one of the pyramids of Egypt, and place them base to base, we have the simplest form of the diamond crystal. The double pyramid has eight sides, each pyramid having four; and it is found that all other perfect diamond crystals, however complicated they may be, have always their facets arranged in sets of four round their centre. In describing the diamond-cutter's work, I shall, however, confine myself to the simplest form of diamond crystal, the double pyramid.

It is the diamond-cutter's object to give this simple crystal a very complicated shape, having a great number of facets, for every separate facet adds to the glitter and colour of the gem. The facets must, however, be regular, and they must have certain sizes, which are proportioned to the size of the diamond. As the latter is only small to begin with, it is plain that the diamond-cutter's work is delicate and skilful. It is also very responsible work, becouse the diamond is valuable, and a little carelessness may spoil it entirely. Until a few years ago almost all our diamonds were cut by Jews residing in Amsterdam or Antwerp. There are now many diamond-cutters in London, but Amsterdam is still the chief centre for the work.

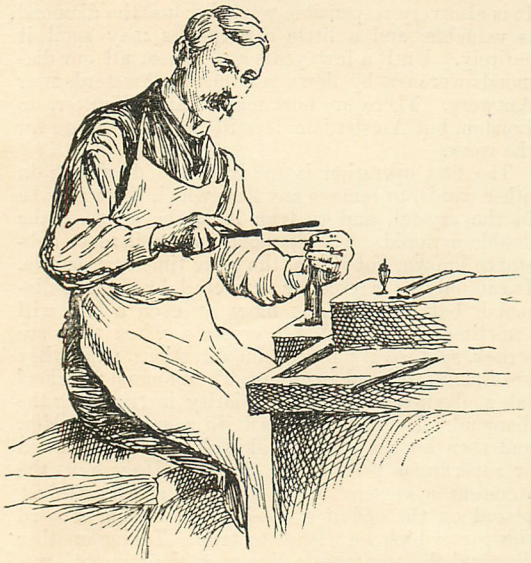
The first operation is to dress the diamond; in other words, to remove any flaw which there may be in the crystal, and to trim it to the shape of the double pyramid. The diamond is the hardest substance known, but it is at the same time very brittle. It can only be marked or scratched by another diamond, but a very light blow or even a fall will sometimes break it. All crystals, when they are struck, split easily in certain directions, while they are difficult to break in others. The diamond 'worker' takes advantage of this peculiarity in trimming the diamond. He first mounts it in a suitable holder, and then knocks off with skilful blows the flawed or superfluous parts of the crystal. He mounts the stone in a cement made of resin and brick-dust placed on the end of a wooden rod, leaving exposed the part which he wishes to trim. Taking another diamond, he scratches a line upon the mounted one, and having fixed the rod in a socket to hold it firm, he places a steel blade in the scratch or notch which he has made, and strikes the back of the blade with a little hammer, when the piece is immediately split off. The stone is then re-set, and another piece is knocked off in the same way; and thus the operation is repeated, until the stone is free from flaws and reduced to its proper shape as a crystal.

It passes now to the diamond-cutter, who gives it its final shape. You will obtain a general idea of the shape if you can imagine that a very little of the lower point of the double pyramid and a good half of the upper part are both cut off. The gem will be set in the ring with the smaller point downwards, and it will be held by a circle of claws arranged round the middle, or 'girdle,' of the stone, in such a way that the light may pass through it from below. In order to make as many facets as possible, the diamond-cutter removes all the edges and corners round the stone in regular order. If you would clearly understand this, consider for a moment how you sharpen a lead-pencil. Suppose that you have made four cuts on four sides of the pencil, you have then a pyramidal point. In continuing to sharpen the pencil, you will cut down each edge in turn, and with every cut you will make a new facet, and you will also make the existing facets a little smaller. This is what the diamond-cutter does in his own way.

Though he is said to *cut* a diamond, he does nothing of the kind. All the points and edges are removed by patiently rubbing one diamond against another. Both of them are mounted in cement, and attached to the ends of wooden rods. The rubbing is performed over a little wooden box which receives the diamond dust produced in the operation. The patience and skill of the workman,

who must see that every facet takes its proper size and shape, may be imagined.

When the cutter has done his work, the diamond

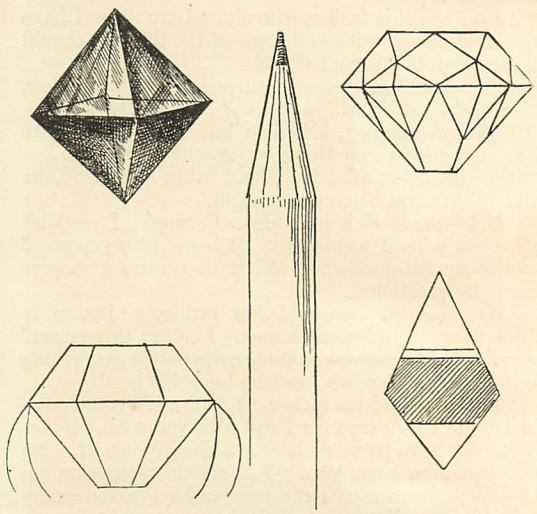


"Dressing" Diamonds.

passes to the polisher. As nothing will scratch it but a diamond, it must be polished with diamond dust, and it is mainly for this purpose that the dust

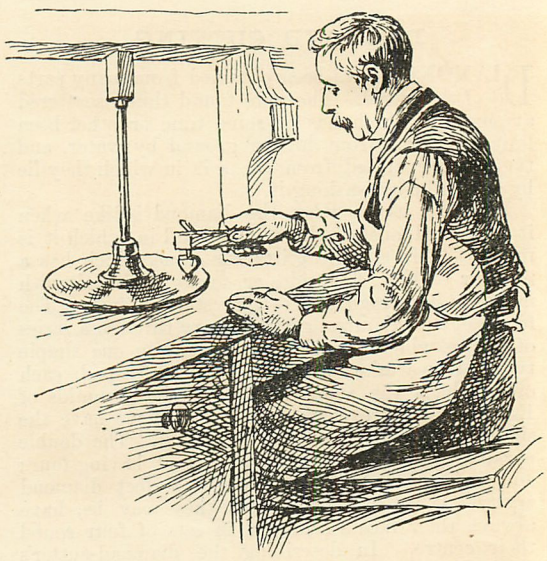
Cutting the Diamond.

formed in diamond-cutting is so carefully collected. The polishing dust is placed on a round iron plate or disc, which is made to revolve very quickly in a horizontal direction. The cut stone is mounted in a kind of solder, and fixed in a handle. The polisher, having moistened the diamond dust upon the plate with oil, holds the facet to be polished against the



Diamond Facets and Setting. Facets of a Pencil Point.

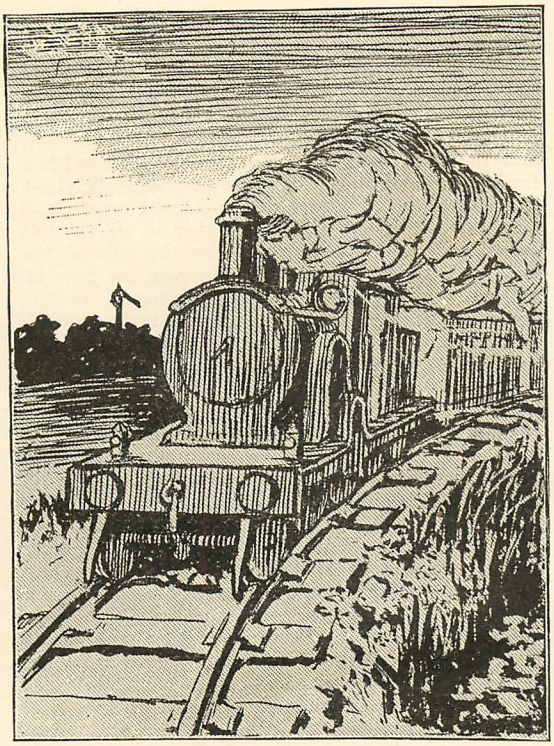
disc as it revolves. The stone is turned from time to time in its bed of solder, in order to bring new facets to the polish, and several stones may be



Polishing the Diamonds.

polished at one time. In this way the gem is carefully finished and made ready for the jeweller who will place it in its setting.

W. A. Atkinson.



Where is the Engine driver?

Where is the Coastguard?

Find the Fireman before it is too late.

A PAGE OF PICTURE PUZZLES.

THE HALL OF THE FAIRIES.

WHERE the brown stream slips by the hazel bed
And laughs by the willows green,
While it sings to the flowers, white and red
That thick on its banks are seen,
There, there, fairest of fair,
Is the court of the fairy queen.

The banks are bedecked with mosses and ferns,
All green from the Wee Folks' feet,
And the oak its richest colouring turns
For joy when the fairies meet;
Bright, bright, is the dancing light,
And fragrant the fairies' seat.

And above the stream as it speeds along,
The dim wood stretches away,
With its quiet green halls, which the fairy throng
Haunt all through the summer day:
At dead of night is the fairies' flight
To the banks where the fairies play.

And many a spell doth the streamlet con,
And many a wondrous word,
But it utters them not, as it hurries on,
To fish, or to beast or bird:
Untold, untold, like fairy gold,
Are the fairy songs he has heard.

DEEP-SEA CABLES.

(*Concluded from page* 387.)

III.—BUOYS AND OTHER THINGS.

CABLE-LAYING and mending is wild and picturesque work—dangerous work, too, as you may easily imagine. Every one has seen a harbour buoy floating peacefully, anchored by a strong chain. A buoy out in mid-ocean is very different. At the mercy of every wave, it bobs and dances and twists and twirls till it seems almost alive.

And it is this complex motion that causes the trouble of the cable-engineer, for, in deep water, you cannot anchor a buoy with a chain; you must do it with a rope with a harpoon anchor at the end, for a long chain would be too heavy, and it is just where the rope is coupled to the buoy that the trouble comes in, for the turning and twisting of the buoy chafes the rope, and before you know where you are, the rope has parted, and your buoy is drifting off on a cruise of its own, no one knows where.

Now, when a cable-ship is doing a mending job, she can only work by daylight, and it is most important that she should not drift away from her position by night.

She therefore requires something to show her where she is during the darkness, and for this purpose the buoys which she has put to mark the line of cable are provided with lamps.

It is a fine sea-picture, a boatful of cable-hands being dropped from the ship out in the wild Atlantic Ocean at sunset. The red buoy which is to be lit up is washing about on the waves, its flag fluttering in the breeze. The boat is lowered from the davits by the means of a steam winch, and you make sure, as you look over the side, that it will be dashed to pieces against the side of the ship, for there is a good sea on. But it takes the water like a duck, and off it goes, the eight oars flashing in the sunset, and the cable foreman sitting in the bow with a freshly trimmed and lit lamp at his feet. The boat has reached the buoy now, and boat and buoy seem to be making efforts to dash each other in pieces; but intelligence and experience are on the side of the boat, and, suddenly, almost before you see how he does it, the cable foreman is sitting astride on the buoy, the flagstaff between his legs, putting on the new lamp. Now the boat is back beside the ship again, the sea doing all in its power to dash it against the side. But the sailors know their business, and in a moment the falls are lowered and attached, the steam winch rattles, and the great boat, with its hundred stone or so of humanity, is lifted out of the water as easily as a man might lift a duck, and brought up to the davits, the sea-water dripping from its keel like a spray of diamonds.

You may ask what breaks a cable lying snug and comfortable at the bottom of the sea? Many things may do it. Where the sea is shallow and the bottom is rocky, currents moving the cable to and fro against the rocks may do the business. I have heard of a cable broken by a whale getting under it; the whale when it got to a certain point could get no further, and it could not get back. It was like a pig who gets its head under a gate-bar, and finds itself fixed. The pig, as a rule, squeals and struggles; the whale could not squeal, but it could struggle, and did; the result was it broke the cable. But the matter did not end there, for in its struggles the whale got so tangled up in the cable that it could not get free, and died. A month or so later a cable-ship came to grapple for the broken cable, and brought the whale also to the surface.

Old cable hands have told me that young sharks use cables for teething purposes. This may or may not be, but I will not vouch for the fact.

Sometimes two cables lie so close together that a ship in grappling for one gets the other by mistake. A cable engineer once told me that on a repairing job he picked up a cable, cut it, and spoke to the person at the other end. He was horrified to get a reply in German, for the person at the other end ought to have been an Englishman. He said that it was a most strange sensation to be abused like that by a man in a temper fifteen hundred miles away. For the German was in Hamburg, and my friend's ship somewhere in the ocean.

As I hinted before, worms and other boring things do all in their power to pierce a cable and render it useless; but the manufacturers nowadays are cleverer than the worms, and take all sorts of precautions to make the article worm-proof.

The strangest case, perhaps, of cable-breaking on record I saw with my own eyes. We had fished a cable up in the English Channel, and we found it had been divided by strokes of an axe. There could be no mistake, the axe-marks were perfectly clear, and the cable was beautifully new and strong. It

was not the work of mermen, but fishermen; the thing had evidently got tangled in a trawl-net, and the trawlers, imagining they had caught some large fish, pulled it up, and found they had caught the Hamburg-Vigo cable. Then they cut it with an axe, whether to disentangle it, or simply out of spite, no one can tell. H. DE VERE STACPOOLE.

THE STORY OF A NECKLACE.

An Old Eastern Legend.

MANY years ago (says the writer of the legend) I made a pilgrimage to Mecca. As I approached the city, I perceived upon the ground a curiously shaped and very beautiful necklace made of pearls. Of course, I picked it up, and placed it in my wallet. As, an hour later, I was walking in the streets of Mecca, I heard that a man had lost such a necklace, and was offering a large reward for its restoration. Immediately I went to the man.

'Tell me,' said I, 'what your necklace was like.'

He described it to me with great minuteness, pearl by pearl. The necklace which I had found was undoubtedly his. I restored it to him.

'Come with me to my house,' he said, 'and I will give you the reward.'

'No,' I replied. 'I thank you for the intention, but I do not need a reward, neither did I return your necklace for any such reason. I am at present in good circumstances, and do not wish to be paid for common honesty.'

The owner of the necklace seemed surprised.

'Then, my friend,' said he, 'I can only express my earnest desire that one day I may be permitted to requite your unselfishness and generosity.'

We bade one another farewell, and parted.

On leaving Mecca, I went to Egypt. There I embarked on a westward-bound ship. Our vessel was attacked and captured by Greek pirates, and all on board were made prisoners. I became the slave of a Christian, with whom I remained until he died. He was kind to me, and had arranged that after his death I should receive my freedom. I left Greece, and came to a town where I obtained the post of book-keeper and writer to a baker, who had customers and acquaintances among the great people of the place. From one of these, on the first day of the month, a servant brought a message to the baker.

'My master,' said the man, 'desires that you will repair to his house, in order to go through your accounts.'

When the baker obeyed the summons he took me with him, to assist in the task. His friend admired my handwriting and quickness of calculation. He asked me to enter his service, and, with the baker's consent, I did so.

Now I began to prosper. My new master was very wealthy. I soon had the entire management of his affairs, and he provided a dwelling-place for me near his own house.

Time passed on. One day my employer put to me a startling question:

'Do you never think of marrying, Abu Bekr?'

'How am I to keep a wife?' said I.

'Oh, that will be all right! *I* will provide everything that is needful—dowry, dwelling, dress—and the bride herself, if you like!' he added, with a laugh.

'Then let it be as you desire,' I replied in all seriousness, for I wished to obey so good a master in everything.

'But, my son,' said my master, 'suppose that the wife I choose for you should not be to your liking? Suppose, for instance, that she should have some physical defect?'

'I shall be content with the wife you give me.'

Then he gave me a list of the lady's defects, from the crown of her head to the soles of her feet, and again, with perfect sincerity, I made the same reply:

'I shall be content with the wife you give me.'

'The wife I am about to give you,' said my employer, 'is my own daughter.'

Soon afterwards he invited a number of friends to his house, and in their presence the marriage contract was drawn up. A few days later he informed me that my new house was ready for me and my bride.

He gave me splendid garments. When I had put them on, he took me into a house that was like a palace. He placed me on a luxurious seat; then caused the bride, closely veiled, according to our Eastern custom, to be brought into the room.

I rose, and hastened to meet her. As her veil was drawn back I beheld the loveliest face and figure in the world! Thinking that there must be some terrible mistake, I rushed out of the room, and ran right into my master, who wanted to know what was wrong.

'That lady,' I gasped, 'is not the one whom I was to wed! She has no defect, and is beautiful as the day!'

He laughed heartily.

'She is indeed your wife, my son. I have no other daughter. I pretended she was ugly, in order that you should not be disappointed when you saw her.'

He laughed again.

Gladly I returned to my bride, to apologise for and explain my sudden flight. Her mind, I quickly discovered, was as sweet as her face.

The next day, as I was admiring my wife's jewels and ornaments, I observed amongst them a pearl necklace which exactly resembled the one I had so long ago found at Mecca. I felt sure, indeed, that it must be the same, and could not forbear to ask my father-in-law how it came into his hands.

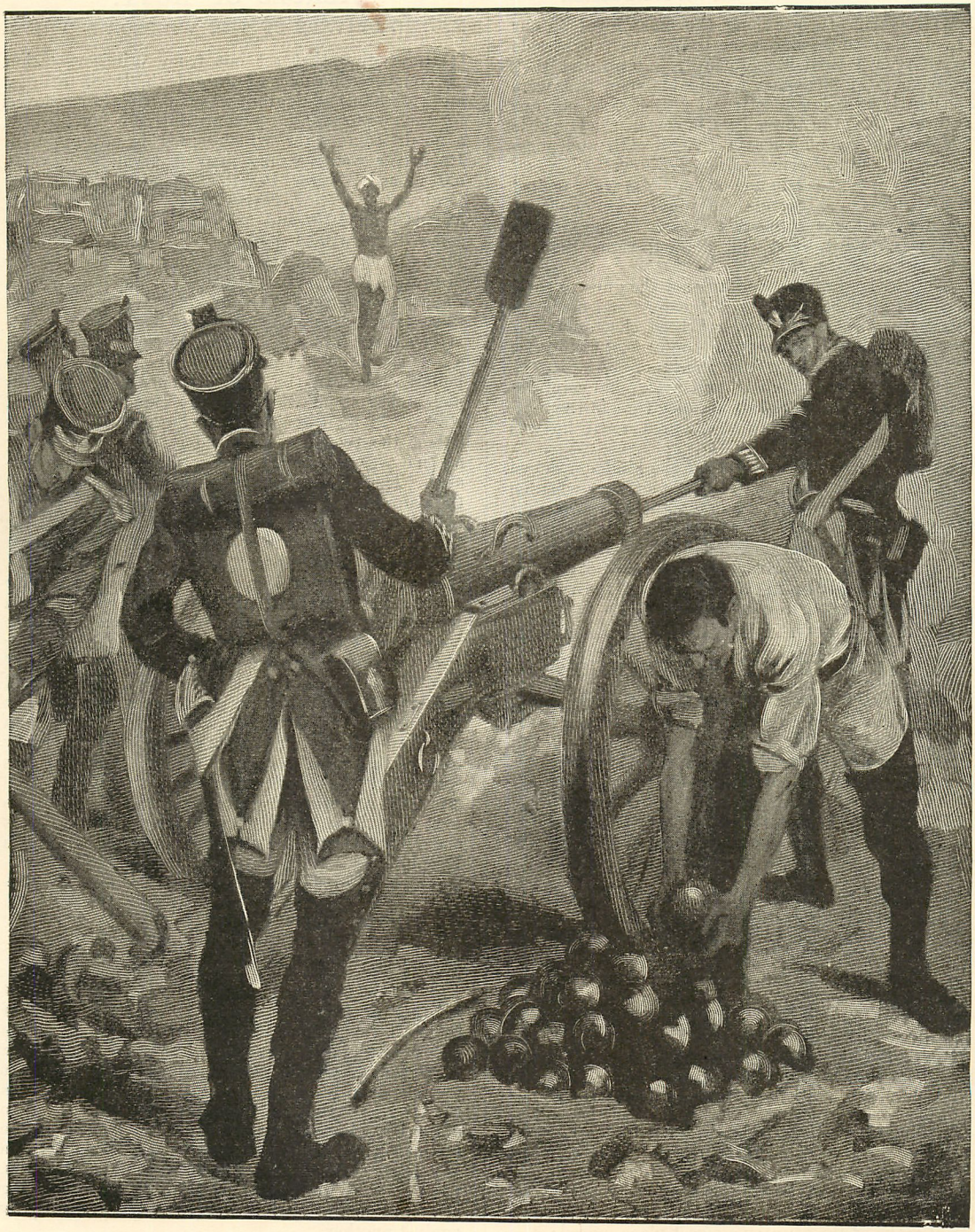
'Why do you ask?' he said.

'Because,' I answered, 'I once picked up just such a necklace in Mecca. The pattern is a very striking and peculiar one.'

Before I finished speaking he embraced me warmly.

'Then you are the man,' he exclaimed, 'who restored that necklace to me, and would accept no reward? Again and again have I prayed for an opportunity of requiting you. And now I have been led, while still ignorant of your identity, to endow you with all my property, and to give you my only child! I have obtained my heart's desire. Let us rejoice together!'

'Her veil was drawn back."



"A man was seen making signs that he wished to say something."

GENEROSITY IN WARFARE.

THE Gurkhas are among the most loyal of our Indian troops, and since 1857 have fought side by side with British regiments; but at first they were some of our most formidable foes, and were constantly crossing our frontier and ravaging our outposts. Even in those days, however, the Gurkhas had immense confidence in British skill and generosity, as the following tale will show.

We were engaged in one of our little wars against the Gurkhas in 1816, and the batteries were in action, when a man was seen on a breach in the Gurkha fort waving his hand and making signs that he wished to say something.

The British Commander ordered the guns to cease whilst a Gurkha slowly left the fort and came towards his foes. His jaw had been shattered by a round shot, and he came with the utmost confidence to ask for medical help from the enemy.

He was at once taken in and his wound carefully attended to, and he remained some time in the military hospital, not being discharged until he was completely cured.

He was extremely grateful for the kindness shown to him, but did not disguise the fact that when he returned to his corps he would fight us again, thus clearly showing, says the officer who tells the story, the Gurkha's strong sense of duty to his country, with which his own private feelings were not allowed to interfere, and also his appreciation of the value of generosity and courtesy in warfare.

NEW YEAR'S GREETINGS.

'A HAPPY New Year,' said the sun to the snow;
'Don't you think it is time you made ready to go?
Next month is the month for the snowdrop to come,
And the crocus ere long will be ready to bloom.
The swallow will soon be preparing her flight;
So, though you're so soft, and so pure, and so white,
I think that it's time you were going away;
So I wish you a Happy New Year and—good-day.'

'A Happy New Year,' said the beam to the rain;
'The flowers ere long will require us again;
They will want your sweet moisture when they are all dry,
And they'll look for me, too, to come down from the sky.
It's so long since we saw them, they're such a sweet sight:
The daffodil bloom is a thing of delight;
Without our assistance they never could do,
You give them their fragrance and I give their hue.'

'A Happy New Year,' said the birds to the flowers;
'We are getting delightfully near to Spring's hours.
The beam and the raindrop were talking to-day,
And they said that the Winter would soon pass away.
Then we in the forest, and you in the mead,
Will make of the country a sweet place indeed;
The children delighted will welcome us home,
So a Happy New Year, and may Spring-time soon come.'

HEROES OF DUTY.

X.—THE DRIVERS OF THE WINDSOR EXPRESS.

THE engine that set out from Windsor station on the afternoon of July 18th, 1898, to draw an express to Paddington, was not usually employed for such a purpose, its general duties being those of a goods engine, for which speed is not required. Its driver was a young man of twenty-two years old named Walter Peart, and the stoker, Henry Dean, was a few years older. The train left Windsor at 4.15, and among its passengers were some distinguished people. All went well until Ealing was passed, and the journey's end not far distant. Then, with appalling suddenness, one of the connecting rods of the driving wheels snapped in two. With an uproar that was heard by a platelayer a quarter of a mile away, the broken rod drove a hole again and again through the fire-box into the boiler. Instantly the footplate on which the driver and stoker stand was swept by clouds of fire and steam. Though scalded and burned to a terrible extent the two men remained at their posts, doing all that was necessary to bring the train to a standstill. The platelayer, whose attention was held by the noise he had heard, watched the on-coming train till it stopped near where he was standing. But the driver and stoker were gone. Running down the line, he found them lying between the metals, where, overcome at last, they had fallen from their engine. They were lifted on to an ambulance, and while being carried to another train which was to convey them to the hospital at Paddington, Walter Peart, anxious that none should think him guilty of cowardice, looked up at the foreman, who walked beside, and said, 'I stuck to the engine; I didn't jump off.' And if further proof was wanted than the word of a brave man, the engine itself was ready to give it, for, on examination, the levers and taps controlling its action were found to be in the positions necessary for stopping the train. The next day these two heroes of duty, Walter Peart and Henry Dean, died of their injuries in St. Mary's Hospital.

FROM THE CITIES OF ITALY.

X.—A CITY OF STRIFE.

OF all the fighting cities of Italy, and a turbulent set in very truth they were, the fiercest of them all was perhaps Perugia, perched like an eagle's nest upon the hills overlooking the plains of Umbria. A terror to all the surrounding towns was that terrible neighbour upon the hill-top, and fierce was the vengeance that fell upon any one rash enough to anger Perugia when once the Griffin banner of the town took the field. If they were not involved in any life-and-death struggle with their neighbours, the Perugians gratified their taste by fierce fighting at home—nobles against burghers, one great family against another.

At one time the burghers of Perugia, the Raspanti as they were called, drove out the nobles and barred the gates against them, and wild tales are told of

the life lived by the exiles. They dwelt in impregnable fortresses on the plain and amongst the lower hills, hunted the wild boar for food, and from time to time succeeded in breaking into the city by force, or entering the houses by night over the roofs, slaying and pillaging after their fierce fashion.

One name stands out conspicuously above the rest, that of Braccio Fortebraccio, a Perugian noble whose youth was spent in exile, and under whose leadership the great families returned at last to power. Braccio learnt warfare as a mercenary soldier, and then, gathering his exiled friends and kindred under his standard, made a desperate attempt to break into Perugia. The magistrates built up the gates and gave orders that no citizen should go beyond the walls; but the Perugians could not resist the temptation of a fight, and jumped down from the ramparts for the pleasure of skirmishing with Braccio's soldiers.

At last a desperate battle was fought on July 15th, 1416, between the Perugians with their ally, the Lord of Rimini, and the exiled nobles. Braccio's forethought decided the fate of the day, for the weather was very hot, and he had been careful to prepare stores of water for his men. The Perugians, who had made no such provision, maddened with thirst, broke their ranks and rushed to the banks of the Tiber to drink, and in that moment of disorganization Braccio swept down upon them and gained a complete victory.

The conquered city not only opened its gates, but offered the government at once to the victor, and Braccio, despot as he was, ruled well. He was a born leader, knowing how to win the affections of his followers and to inspire them with his own ardour in time of conflict. Full of energy himself, he expected the same from his people, and had no mercy upon loafers, 'the wearers-out of the pavement,' as he called them. Great fighter as he was, he seems to have had a grace and charm of manner which won hearts for him everywhere, and his name was long loved and honoured in his native town.

It would have been well if he could have been content with his wise rule of Perugia, but his ambition began to look further afield, and set him dreaming of the sovereignty of all Italy. In 1433 he marched against the town of Aquila, which had resisted the Perugian authority. Before leaving home he gave his wife a casket, bidding her open it only on the news of his death or victory. For a year the siege of Aquila went on, and the anxious wife in the hill-city waited for tidings. Then came fatal news. Braccio had fallen in fight, cut down, not by the enemy, but by a traitor Perugian, one of the burghers who had never learnt to pardon the noble who had broken their power. For three days he lay desperately wounded. But the gallant spirit was broken by the sense of failure, and Braccio died for lack of the will to live.

When the broken-hearted widow opened the casket, she found therein a sceptre and a black veil, telling her that her lord had set all his fortunes upon one cast, and had meant that this campaign should end in death or the lordship of Italy. The attempt had failed, and only the veil of widowhood was left for the wife who should have shared his throne.

Braccio is the only one of the great nobles of Perugia who comes near to winning our hearts; the rest are fierce and terrible figures enough. There is Niccolo, surnamed Piccinino, or the Little One, the dwarfish, sickly captain who was yet such an indomitable soldier that he turned even his small stature to account by hiding himself in a sack, and being thus carried across the field of battle, appearing suddenly where he was least expected. And there are the fierce Baglioni, as relentless as they were strong and beautiful, at once the pride and the terror of their city. One of the treasures of our National Gallery is a little picture by Raphael of St. George spurring his prancing horse upon the dragon, and we remember, as we look at it, that the painter, in his boyhood, may have watched the young Astorre Baglioni laying ten enemies at once in the dust under the feet of his horse, 'a most fierce beast,' says the chronicler, 'who gave his foes what trouble he best could.'

The very sports of the Perugians were characteristic of the fighting city. In the springtime, on Sundays and festivals, the young men assembled in the square, arrayed in helmets and cuirasses, and with their legs encased in padded leather stockings, and, dividing into two parties, hurled stones at each other, each party struggling to drive the opposing one from the centre of the square. Till nightfall the strife went on; children took part in it for the first two hours; old men, watching from the windows, forgot their years and plunged into the contest. There were sure to be a dozen or more killed and wounded before the spring twilight darkened into night.

Such was Perugia in the old days, a turbulent town, torn and distracted by the fierce passions of her sons. In our own peaceful times it is pleasant to linger in the great square, or to stroll about the hills and wonder at the great oxen, with their white skins and gentle eyes, slowly dragging the carts along the country roads. One of these very oxen acted as pioneer some years ago in an interesting discovery, the story of which will come as a peaceful conclusion to this account of the fighting city. The great beast fell forward while crossing a field, and was found to have thrust its leg between the stones of an underground arch. A staircase was discovered leading down into a wonderful tomb, the resting-place of the great Etruscan family of the Voluminii, who were mighty more than a thousand years before the names of Fortebraccio and Baglioni were spoken in Perugia. There they sit, those old Etruscans, all in wondrous terra-cotta and white stucco, each one upon his or her couch, looking at us with grave eyes as we stand in the tomb where their friends laid them in the days before the Roman Empire. Their heads are crowned with garlands, and in their hands are the goblets in which they pledged each other as they sat at their feasts in the far-past ages. And the butterflies carved around them tell us that even the old Etruscans knew something of the truth which the ancients were wont to express by the joyous living insect coming forth from the dead chrysalis, and felt that the souls of their loved ones were not left lifeless there under the green Umbrian plain.

MARY H. DEBENHAM.

"Before leaving home he gave his wife a casket."

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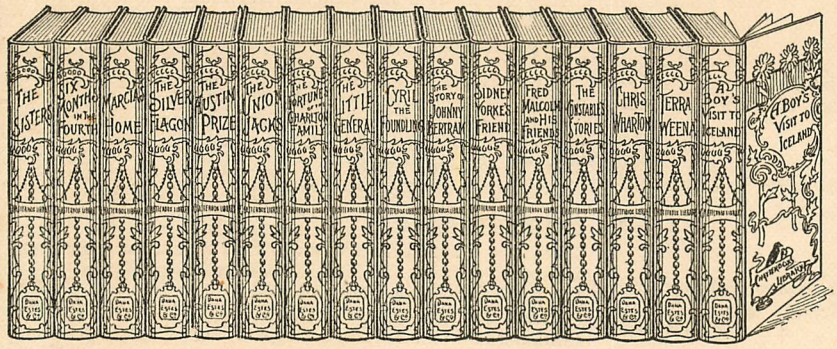

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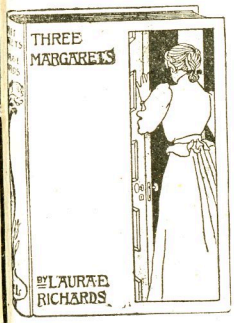

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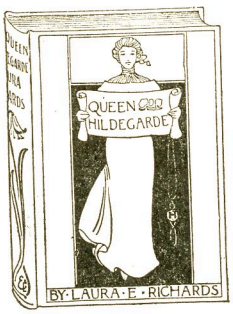

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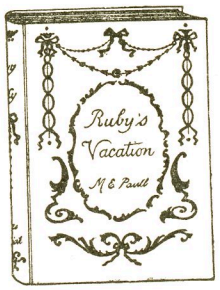

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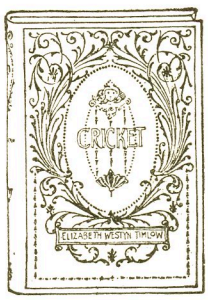

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